HOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

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Robert Mason, Time, Inc.

By Roland E. Wolseley

CLERGYMEN MUST BE

NOW and then religious writers, clergymen, and deans of theological schools discuss the problem of equipping the minister so that he can use the tools of journalism and publicity. The fact that it is discussed reveals that clergymen are not usually able to write, edit and handle their public relations as well as they should.

This problem came up for discussion at the Christian Writers' and Editors' Conference held by the American Baptist Convention and the National Council of Churches at Green Lake, Wisconsin, in July. It also received concentrated attention in May when dealt with by a panel in Boston at the Religious Newswriters' Association annual convention.

One dean of a large school of theology said, "It is the task of the seminaries to prepare a man for the pulpit. A minister cannot be expected to be an expert in everything. . . . He can run his church without the newspaper, but not without pastoral calls."

Evaluating Courses

This attitude has been standard for many years. But now it is against a trend. More and more deans are saying that something should be done to equip the clergyman to deal with journalistic and publicity problems, but they do not see how this instruction can be crowded into the busy schedules of theological students.

All educators are faced with the problem of selection of courses. They emphasize and recommend that students put first what they, the educators, consider vital. It is not reasonable to expect a theological seminary to make a course in church publicity or religious writing as important a requirement as a class in church history or interpretation of the New Testament. Yet to give a journalism course precedence over some other is virtually the only way a seminary can provide proper preparation for a clergyman who will have to deal with press, radio, television and other facets of church public relations.

The problem is not to make the clergyman an expert in journalism. No one has demanded that. It cannot be done in one course, nor in a one-year program in our best journalism schools. Instead the problem is to equip the clergyman with sufficient understanding of public relations to enable him to cooperate with the mass communications media of our time, help them help the church, and avoid policies which unnecessarily do the church harm.

To achieve this, what might the seminaries do? They might, as some already do, (1) offer one-semester or two-quarter courses in religious journalism, publicity and public relations, and require them of all graduates; (2) offer such courses on an elective basis; (3) offer short courses during pastor's schools, or on other special occasions, permitting at least from three to five weeks' time for this subject as well as others not covered by a regular seminary education; (4) conduct special seminars, denominational or interdenominational, in a regular series over a period of years; (5) channel gifted young men and women into sympathetic schools of journalism and provide them with undergraduate and graduate instruction, require that they study religion simultaneously, arrange for a substantial period of practical experience (say five years), and then appoint them to positions in the denomination from which they can carry out on the local level, a systematic plan of coaching and guidance such as the third and fourth suggestions above.

Broader Public Relations

The dean who said that the minister cannot be an expert in press relations is right, although he overstated the situation. But he is guilty of a misconception—that press relations consist merely of some sort of relationship to local newspapers.

The title of the panel, "Should Theological Seminaries Teach Press Relations?" was taken too literally by certain of the debaters. For "press relations" is an umbrella term, and the dean dealt with only one phase. It covers:

> Cooperating with secular newspapers when they ask for news of the local church and its personnel; taking such news to it also is involved.
>
> Cooperating similarly with secular magazines, news agencies, syndicates, radio broadcasters and television stations.
>
> Planning, preparing and producing a church or parish

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PUBLICISTS

paper, a church bulletin, and any of the countless numbers of special pieces of literature customarily issued by churches.

Cooperating with the wider church, however it may be organized in any given denomination, by providing facts for regional, state and national periodicals and news agencies of the denomination or of interdenominational bodies.

Spending money on paid advertising of church activities.

Promoting the church's work through other than journalistic or electronic means—car cards, posters, 10-minute speeches and telephone campaigns.

Finding ways to correct misunderstanding of what the church believes in and how it operates. This is the public relations function of which press relations are only a part, often minor.

All this cannot be brushed aside as of so little importance that a seminary need offer no course dealing with it. A pastor may be able to run his church without a newspaper—although how poorly sometimes is all too evident—but he cannot gain maximum results and be most widely effective if he disregards the facets of press relations as they actually exist.

New Interest

In certain communities, one or the other of the above plans has been used. At least fifteen seminaries are offering courses, optional so far as can be determined, dealing with aspects of religious journalism and publicity. Usually they emphasize either religious writing or publicity, public relations coming into consideration in the latter, in a sort of cart-before-the-horse fashion.

Increasingly popular is the plan of setting up short seminars or courses to guide clergymen in these areas. G. Dean Goodwin, of the American Baptist Convention, has conducted such sessions in a dozen American cities from coast to coast in the past few years. Even longer at this has been Ralph Stoody, head of Methodist Information, whose meetings are set up on a more elaborate scale than attempted so far by others. A few Methodist conferences have appointed public relations directors to do such work. Several universities—Syracuse and Wisconsin in recent years—have held conferences or short courses with similar objectives of helping clergymen with their journalistic and public relations problems. An outstanding record in the field of religious radio is being established at McCormick Seminary, Chicago, under the leadership of George-William Smith. This is one of the few seminaries in the nation which require attendance in such a course as a prerequisite for graduation.

There is a general feeling that many clergymen know what to do about public relations problems, but do not have the time or energy to deal with them, or do not consider them more important than others of their activities. This writer knows several clergymen who find time to spend afternoons listening to speakers before women's group meetings. They attend every session faithfully, month after month. Or they participate passively in some other session at which their occasional presence might be enough. These same men either have no church bulletin, never seem quite able to get out a church paper, rarely notify the local press or radio of their Sunday services, or make no effort to enlist the aid of members capable of helping publicize the church's work on a large scale.

A minister, except in rare instances, need not be an expert journalist or publicist, although the competent journalist's ability to do research, obtain facts and make his material attractive would not be amiss for any clergyman, who has what amounts to readers and listeners every week. He at least should be able to deal with and make the best use, for the sake of the church, of the increasingly important and complex media of mass communications that are such intimate and powerful influences on the lives of his parishioners. A mandatory course that will assist him to do so should, therefore, be offered by every theological seminary.

The Message of the Pilgrims

WE are all Pilgrims. We are not seeking simply material things, but God. We are seeking a peaceful world and a better life. Of what use is it to ship food and clothing to people to keep them alive if they are to grow up and go through the same things we have gone through twice in our lifetime, of unspeakable war and destruction. Of what value is it to save the body if we cannot save the soul? I think that is what Adolph Keller, the great Christian leader of Switzerland, had in mind when he said, (and I can convey his statement to you best if I try to emulate some of his quaint European accents), speaking to the American Committee of the World Council of Churches in 1944. He made this statement which I shall always remember: "Vot ve need is not more facts. Ze vorld is sick of facts. Vot ze vorld needs is ze Mysterious Fact zat is above all facts—ze Mysterious Fact of God! Ve need ze gospel of Christ in all its entirety—an approach of ze heart—a Christian hope zat vill hang like stars above ze whole vorld of mankind. Vot Europe needs is not only bread, but a Vord of Hope." That's the message of the Pilgrims. Going out into a country whose direction they did not know, they went out trusting in God because their hearts were fixed upon a great religious hope.—*Edwin T. Dahlberg, Delmar Baptist Church, St. Louis, Missouri, before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.*

The Closing Sermon at Evanston by One of the World Council's First Presidents

God's Timing

By Eivind Berggrav

Ephesians 4:11-16.

And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every kind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.

THAT little word "until"—did you notice it? "*Until* we all attain the unity of the faith." There is always an "until" when God is working through men. "When the time had fully come," God himself acted. God always does.

This word "until" is written also over the future of the ecumenical movement. None of us started it, none of us made it grow. On the contrary, we ourselves are those who are to grow. In the wording of St. Paul: "We are to grow up in every way to him who is the head." Growth is always dependent on God. *We* cannot add one cubic to our stature. All growth is a process, more akin to creation than to fabrication.

Many of us therefore liked the official name which our Council had before the Amsterdam Assembly. The name was: "The World Council of Churches in *process of formation*." As a matter of fact, it did not stop being a process after its formation in 1948, and never will. It is true that we are in a process, it is not true that we ourselves are producing a movement.

Patience of the Gardener

You cannot hurry a process of this kind by mechanical means. You cannot hurry the process which will make us one family of Christian churches—not by means of resolutions or of declarations. Every gardener knows that he must have patience, and those working in God's vineyards certainly always need it.

A gardener can have patience because he knows that growth is directed until the harvest is ripe. Our text reveals to us the direction of *our* growth. It is *up to him* who is the head that we shall grow.

In spite of everything, the gardener sometimes may become impatient, and so do we. There is a holy impatience, such as in the prayer for the Kingdom of God. But there is also another sort, a sentimental impatience such as when you and I feel that others are too slow in their moves. Yes, there are people who get angry with the Christian churches because the churches are not prepared to unite now and on the spot. These people ask: Why can't they?

The answer to all sentimental impatience has to be that the growth is up to God and will be completed in his time. We do not determine the timing of God's process.

Days may even be ahead of us when people will be inclined to feel that the ecumenical movement is getting what we in the northern world call a frosty night, threatening to kill the faint plant. Certainly we shall not always have the impression that our movement has the wind in its sails—as it looks today.

Faithful Followers

As sure as a movement is of God, it certainly will also have enemies—not only opposers, but powers of evil striking blows upon it. In such days the call for *endurance in patience* will reach our ears from the voice in holy Scripture. Remember: *"until."*

Don't, then, be anxious about your life, World Council of Churches! If the leaven is of God, be sure that he himself will guard and direct it *until* "all of it is leavened."

Certainly God needs our imagination and our enthusiasm to get us on the move from a stiffened status quo, but it can never be our dreams or phantasies which give growth. No, only full commitment every new day to God's will, faith, hope and love in and from Jesus Christ will do that!

I have to confess frankly that I myself have often been impatient because progress toward the one family of Christian churches in the world was so unduly delayed by what I regarded as too-cautious Christians. I know now that this feeling arose out of lack of absolute commitment to God's will. God does not want "ecumeniacs," but faithful followers, eagerly expectant, enduring in holy patience.

There is no assurance that we shall become satis-

EIVIND BERGGRAV, Bishop of Oslo and Primate of Norway from 1937 until 1951, gained world renown during World War II by his opposition to government control of the church under the nazi occupation. As one of the six presidents of the World Council of Churches, he demonstrated the force of his personality at Evanston. He has written extensively, and his books have been translated into Swedish, German and English.

fied and happy because *our* aspirations seem to come true! But we are fully in accord with Christ when we are filled with gratitude that *under God* we may believe that he himself stirred up this process of growth. Many of us have felt this gratitude here in Evanston. If I go back to Amsterdam, I become ashamed of myself. God did not take directions from us, but he acted in his own way, and we become filled with thanksgiving for the growth that has taken place. It awakens in me the steadfast hope that God still has greater things in store, *until*———. To be under God *until* is our burden and our privilege.

God has given us no big results to be proud of. He has good reasons not to like our pride about results. But something important has changed; there is a new start before us, and we know for certain that our growth will be *up to him* who is the head—the head also of his Christian family of churches on earth.

AN ECUMENICAL LITANY

Used at the closing worship service of the World Council of Churches' Second Assembly

Minister: We give thanks to Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that we are one in our Lord Jesus Christ; not by the agreement of our minds or the consent of our wills, but by that which he, in his unmerited grace has done for us in his incarnation, death and resurrection, and by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: We thank thee, O God.

Minister: We give thanks that he has called us into his faith, and has laid upon us an allegiance to himself that is above all other loyalties.

Congregation: We thank thee, O God.

Minister: We give thanks for the knowledge that though we are divided in outward form we are all the objects of the love and grace of God.

Congregation: We thank thee, O God.

Minister: We thank God for the fellowship of prayer, thought and action of the World Council of Churches. We give thanks for all that we have accomplished together and learned in our fellowship; for prejudices overcome; misunderstandings removed; sympathies enlarged; insight deepened and for all advance that has been made towards a common mind.

Congregation: We thank thee, O God.

Minister: We give thanks for the joy that we find in sharing the treasures of worship and devotion that we even now hold in common.

Congregation: We thank thee, O God.

Minister: We give thanks that a new understanding of the message of hope has been given to us. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fades not away, reserved in heaven for us.

Congregation: We thank thee, O God.

Minister: We acknowledge that our understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, the hope of the world, has been limited by our pride, willfulness and narrowness of mind, and that our witness to the world is weakened by our divisions.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Minister: We confess our failure in understanding one another, of having sympathy with one another; we acknowledge our failures in obedience, our failures to carry out God's will in our common relationships.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Minister: We pray that through patience and humility Christians of each several communion may be led to a deeper understanding of those truths of the gospel to which they have borne witness; into a wider understanding of those truths for which other communions have stood; and finally into an apprehension of the truth in its fullness, wherein all our partial apprehensions shall be brought into unity.

Congregation: Lord, hear our prayer.

Minister: We pray together to Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that he will forgive us our sins, and grant us true repentance and grace to amend our ways.

Congregation: Lord, hear our prayer.

Minister: We pray for all the members of the staff of the World Council of Churches that they may receive strength, courage and joy in carrying out their tasks, that new visions be granted to them.

We pray for the member churches of the World Council of Churches that they may be true witnesses of the gospel. We pray for the Church Universal.

Congregation: Lord, hear our prayer.

Minister: We pray for the exploited, the persecuted and the suffering, that they may know that the arm of the Lord is not shortened and may by God's mercy find speedy comfort and deliverance.

Congregation: Lord, hear our prayer.

Minister: We pray that all men everywhere, in a world distracted and divided, may turn to Christ, the hope of the world, who makes us one in spite of our divisions; that he may bind in one those whom many worldly claims set at variance; and that the world may find peace and unity in him; to whom be glory for ever.

Congregation: Lord, hear our prayer.

All unite in the Lord's Prayer (each in his own tongue).

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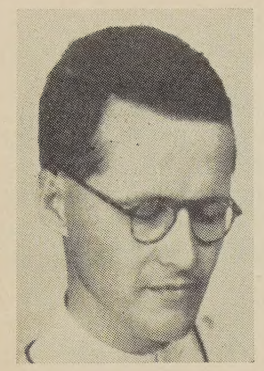

The Day of Victory

By Lesslie Newbigin

I know whom I have believed and I am sure that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. II Timothy 1:12.

HERE is a man in prison, looking back for a moment over life, and facing death. He looks back over those tremendous years of missionary labor—Antioch, Galatia, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome. But it is only for a moment. He is not facing backward, but forward —to the Christ who is coming. And he is content to commit all to him. "I know whom I have believed and I am sure that he is able to guard until that Day . . ."

What day? He does not need to give it any name except "that Day," because when all your hopes and fears are keyed up to a certain event you don't need to give the day a name. It is just "The Day" —"D Day," if you like. That is how the men of the Old Testament spoke of it—the day when God would at last show his hand, when justice would be done and evil thrown out of its usurped dominion. They longed for it, prayed for it, century after century.

Searching Dawn

And in the fullness of time it came. A voice was heard, different from the voice of any prophet. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel." Repent and believe! But men could not. D-day, when it came, took them all by surprise. When the night ended and the day dawned, they were all on the wrong side. God did more than they had longed for. He not only showed his hand but laid bare his heart, he brought not only justice but something infinitely more than justice—that mercy without which justice can neither be done or endured.

The light of that dawn was so searching that even those who had prayed for its dawning could not endure it when it came, and tried to blot it out.

LESSLIE NEWBIGIN, an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland, became a Presbyterian bishop in 1947 when the Church of South India was formed by a union of Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist and Anglican communions—a union for which he had worked untiringly. As bishop of the diocese of Madura and Ramad, he combines the work of missionary and evangelist with that of administrator, scholar and writer. His interest in the ecumenical movement took him to Amsterdam, where he became chairman of the World Council of Churches' advisory commission, and to Evanston, where he was chairman of the special committee which wrote the "Message to the Churches" adopted by the Assembly. He is the author of several books, the latest of which is The Household of God.

And so on that strange D-Day Christ fought alone, and alone cast out the prince of darkness. When that mortal struggle was done, and he cried, "It is finished," a bridgehead had been won for the rule of love in the midst of the kingdom of evil. The enemy had been decisively beaten, death itself was no longer to have the last word over life, and Jesus our brother was to be on the throne of heaven until all resistance was wiped out.

It was not the end, but it was the beginning of the end. There was still a fight to be waged, still resistance to be met. There would still be counter-attacks. There would be skeptics who would decline to believe the real significance of what had happened. But to those who understood, who believed, this was the beginning of the end. The end was in sight now. It was no longer a remote possibility. It was a certainty. And its character was known. It was the victory of Jesus.

Therefore now is the day to throw everything into the fight, never slacking until Victory Day comes—and every day brings it nearer. That is the day Paul is thinking about when he says "Until that Day." He is a man who knows that he lives between D-day and V-day, Christ's coming and his coming again, and those are the twin points on which he takes all his bearings.

Life's Final Goal

Everyone knows what difference there is between having and not having something to look forward to. Infinite time stretching out endlessly to the future, with nothing definite to look forward to, is—literally—appalling. But time given between now and a definite goal in the future, time that can be filled with powerful action because there is something to work to at the other end—that is something of a quite different kind. In fact we only keep going by setting before ourselves limited chunks of time, with something at the other end to work toward. But we cannot avoid asking ourselves the question, "After that, what? In the end, what?"

Do you remember that bit in Scott's journey to the Pole where they were faced with an absolutely featureless waste of snow stretching ahead of them and merging with the sky, so that there was no horizon and not a landmark of any description in sight? It was like walking into nothing, and they found that they were constantly wandering off the proper course because there was nothing to

focus their eyes on. So they threw snowballs ahead of them, and then they could advance, because there was the South Pole; so they went on in hope. But what if there were really no Pole—only an infinite snow field, and we human beings perpetually tossing forward snowballs and following them till we drop? You cannot avoid eventually asking the question, "In the end, what?"

Well, what is there? Two different answers are often present in our minds. One says, "In the end we hope for a better world, a world free from war and want, from cruelty and fear. The real importance of human life is what it contributes to achieving that." I agree that we must certainly hope and work for a better world for our children. But we are talking now about the end. If this were really the end, then two things would follow:

(1) That all the generations that led up to it, all the people dead and buried before it came, would be merely waste products, the shavings on the floor after the job is done. The idea that each human being is precious for his own sake, would have to be denounced as an antisocial delusion. The totalitarian planners who are willing to liquidate human beings for the sake of getting on with the plan would have to be declared right.

(2) That the only thing which matters about any human action is the result; that motives do not matter; that sincerity or humbug, good will or malice, are irrelevant distinctions; that only results affect the final result and therefore only results matter.

Standards of Judgment

Most people shrink from drawing these conclusions. But they generally fail to face the question, "Why shrink from them if that shrinking is merely weakening your commitment to the real aim?"

The other answer says, "No, what matters is each individual soul. Our bodies die; the world will eventually disappear, and nothing will be left of all our human achievement. But the soul goes on to win or lose eternal life. That is its real end." I agree that eternal life is our true end. But was I only put into this world to escape out of it? Does its history have no meaning? And, if eternal life for myself is the final aim, may I take it that selfishness is the final law if only it is farsighted enough?

Everyone knows something of the perplexity that besets us when we try to think out the question, "What is the real standard of judgment on our actions?" The simple answer, "Judge by results," does not satisfy us, (1) because we do not know exactly what the results are until long after the action is done, perhaps long after we are dead; and (2) because we *know* that there is another standard, that a good cause may fail and a bad one may succeed, and that it is better to die a miserable death in a good cause than to prosper and grow fat in a bad one.

But where does that lead us? Shall we just concentrate on keeping our motives pure and let the world go to blazes? No, of course not. We are bound to make the best calculations of consequences. Yet we remain convinced—and we shall not act rightly unless we do remain convinced—that results do not have the last word, that we may fail and yet be right, may succeed and yet be wrong.

The Last Word

But what does have the last word? Of course you know the answer that I'm going to give. Everyone knows it. I find that the most primitive South Indian villager, who has never heard of Jesus, knows it. God, who made us, has the last word. God's judgment is the final judgment. But what exactly does that mean? Does it simply mean that he watches what goes on and keeps on making "mental notes" of approval and disapproval? But a mental note is not a judgment. It only indicates a judgment to come. To say God has the word means that at the end he will not only reveal his judgment but also carry it out, so that everything which finally resists him is finally destroyed. The word finally means, precisely, at the end. That day is the last day as far as this world's history is concerned.

That is the day Paul is looking forward to. And he looks forward to it with eager hope because in a sense he knows it already. It began when Jesus died and rose again, and thereby revealed the judgment of God—the judgment of holy love by which all this loveless world is condemned and yet redeemed, and the victory of God by which Satan's grip upon the world is decisively broken. Paul knew that, from the day when the risen Christ met him on the road to Damascus. He knew then who was the conqueror of death and the Lord of life, who would have the last word, who would be victor and judge.

The Victorious Christ

When Paul looked forward, he did not see a blank. He did not have to toss snowballs ahead to get something to focus on. He saw Christ. Christ the victorious, Christ who was dead and is alive and has the keys of death and hell. His eyes were fixed on that day—the day of Christ's coming. And meanwhile he could commit himself and every deed and word into the hands of the living Christ, the conqueror of death.

V-Day is still ahead of us. We are still at war. Evil is not yet destroyed though its power is broken. We still have to face death—our own personal death and the corruption and decay that eventually buries all our achievements. But we now know that these do not have the last word. The risen Christ is our assurance of that. Just as he committed himself and his cause wholly into the Father's hands, and faced his own personal death and the utter defeat of his cause, and was raised up to a new life wherein all that was lost was restored and glorified, so we can commit ourselves and all our deeds, our labors for a better world, our acts of witness to the love of Christ, into God's hands, facing death and if necessary

defeat; knowing that it is all safely kept by him who is able to raise up and restore all things at the day of his coming, to create new heavens and a new earth, and to raise us up from the dust to share together with all his people of all ages the joy of his eternal Kingdom.

That day will be a day of surprises. Things that look big now will look small then. A cup of cold water may count for more than a battleship. An idle word may show up as black as murder. It will be a day of surprises. But we know what kind of surprises they will be, because we know Jesus and he is the Judge. "I know whom I have believed," says Paul. That is the real heart of the matter. Judgment day is not something utterly unknown. We have seen it, because we have seen Jesus on his cross. And we know him. That's what gives Paul his assurance, and that's what gives us the assurance to say, "Christ—the Hope of the World."

We do not live in a trackless waste with only a blank in front of us. There is really something to look forward to—the victory of the reign of God. His was the first word in creation, and his will be the last. And we can confidently commit every day's obedience to him, because we have known him, and we know that he is able to keep that which we have committed to him, until that day.

A Sermon for All Saints' Day

Everyday Saints

By Raymond Calkins

THE word "saint" has a curious history of ecclesiastical limitation. As used in the New Testament, it is a most inclusive term. The saints in Philippi, Corinth, Rome, to whom the apostle addresses his epistles, were for the most part humble people, without position or distinction. They were not stars in the sky, but rather flowers sown by the hand of God in the common field. But their lives were dedicated to God; they were sincere if imperfect disciples of Christ, and to them was given the name of saints.

But when we move out into the history of the church, we discover that the name was limited to those who had attained a spiritual distinction beyond that of the rank and file, or to those who possessed miraculous powers. And the word "saint" has never yet wholly recovered its original meaning.

All Saints' Day, however, summons us back to the New Testament idea of a saint: of one, namely, who has so given his life to God, who has so planted in his heart the spirit of Christ as the central inspiration of his life, that his character, little by little, has taken on qualities that mark it off and give it spiritual significance. You can always tell a saint, whether at home, school, business or play. And when we have seen such a person, we are ready to admit that here is something which is not the product of secular culture but the outgrowth of a deeper source.

Now it is constantly necessary to remind ourselves what real sainthood is. The current estimate is either too high or too low. Sometimes it is too high. We think of saints as people of a lofty kind of piety, who belong in a class by themselves to which we feel we can never belong, and are not sure that we want to belong. Or again, our estimate is too low. A saint, we feel, is one who thinks he is holier than others, which is only another way of saying that he thinks he is holier than he is. Or he is a person who possesses the negative virtues of meekness, humility and resignation, but is short of the positive virtues of courage and daring.

Real Sainthood

Evidently the New Testament saints belonged to neither extreme. They were not weak and nerveless people; rather, they were brave and forceful followers of Jesus. Neither were they finished products. The apostles kept busy pointing out to them their faults and failings.

What, then, were they? They were men and women who felt that they had been bought with a price and called to live pure and holy lives, expressing the gospel which they possessed as a precious treasure in their hearts. The New Testament presents no more moving spectacle than that of this faithful company of the saintly as they went about spreading the fragrance of dedicated

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living in the midst of the corruption of their times. They offer comfort and inspiration for all of us through their evidence of the possibility of real sainthood existing in the average man.

There is, too, vast inspiration in the lives of the great saints of the Christian faith. Take Saint Francis as an example. Here was a man who was neither learned nor brilliant, not even a priest trained in sacred knowledge, but a person of indomitable sincerity and devotion whose aim was to live as Jesus lived. His effect upon human history is incalculable, for his life made the cross of Christ credible once more. Men looked into his eyes and saw there the shining light of a soul sanctified by truth; humbled, they forsook all to follow Christ. And from this rebirth of devotion there came a regeneration of civilization.

From time to time such great saintly lives have appeared like bright luminaries in the heavens to attract the gaze and direct the progress of mankind. Thomas Chalmers was a man venerated from one end of Scotland to the other by both the high and humble. For a decade before he died, he had passed beyond the sphere of criticism into that of universal homage. He seemed unconscious of it and went on his way, as Carlyle said of him, with his heavenly industries, his life a constant benediction. In our own land, Phillips Brooks attained similar stature. Never was a man more loved in his community than he. Every mail brought him homage from some grateful heart, not because of his eloquence as a preacher, but because of his goodness, his insight into human need, his unrestricted compassion for others.

Cloud of Witnesses

The church has a right on All Saints' Day to be proud of the glorious roll call of the great saints which it has produced. But an even finer evidence of the power of the Christian inspiration is its ability to make real saints out of the average, everyday man or woman. That the glory of God should touch earth's best is less wonderful than that it should transform ordinary human material, devoid of any special spiritual distinction or capacity. That is a miracle. And it is precisely to this fact that All Saints' Day points.

Such a festival is unique to Christianity. The rituals of other faiths commemorate many a hero. In one ritual alone do we find a date set apart to commemorate those who did no lofty deed, whose names are inscribed upon no monument for men to admire, but whose lives were lived with such sincerity and devotion, in such close fellowship with God, that they enabled other men to see God in them. It was the perception of this truth which caused James Russell Lowell to write:

> One feast, of holy days the crest,
> I, though no Churchman, love to keep,
> All-Saints,—the unknown good that rest
> In God's still memory, folded deep;
> The bravely dumb that did their deed,
> And scorned to blot it with a name,
> Men of the plain heroic breed,
> That loved Heaven's silence more than fame.

Longfellow writes: "Lives of great men all remind us/We can make our lives sublime." But they also remind us how little able we are to scale the lofty summits of sainthood to which they arrived. If their lives impress us, do they not also depress us? If we had only their lives to guide us, might we not have a great sense of moral despair? But we have more. We have the help of a great cloud of witnesses, of men and women no better than ourselves who still acquired the virtue of holiness. Saints they were who had simply committed themselves to the cause of Christ and testified by their conduct to the influence of their Master. They were not exceptionally gifted or endowed to work miracles. They were the uncanonized saints who have directed and sustained our lives, who wore the garment of the most beautiful qualities of the human spirit, and by their silence or their speech have spoken to us with the authority of a great purity.

Modern Saints

All of us have known saints such as these—saints it may be of our own households and firesides, who have worn no sandals and on whose heads no visible halos were needed because the light of God was in their eyes, and their very faces expressed a gospel.

Somehow the presence of Christ in a human soul lends spiritual significance. It gives one's life both the tenderness and the power of him in whom truth, courage and authority were at one with spiritual sensitivity. Such is the beauty of all saintly lives, and in this great democracy of the Spirit all have their place.

Let us not forget the vast service which even the humblest of these saints perform. They are an unanswerable argument for the reality of the spiritual life. No proof of the truth of the gospel is so effective as the biographical witness of the authentic saints. It is they who preserve and perpetuate whatever is good in the world and thus create the soul-atmosphere which future generations will breathe, for not a single element in a saintly life is ever lost. Thus it is given to us to believe that through countless such everyday, quiet, holy lives, God is to remake his world. In simple truth, the salvation of the world depends upon each of us becoming an everyday saint. Pascal has said that "the serene and silent beauty of a holy life is the most powerful influence in the world next to the might of God." And Bayard Taylor has written:

> The healing of the world
> Is in its nameless saints. Each separate star
> Seems nothing, but a myriad scattered stars
> Break up the Night, and make it beautiful.

In such a constellation each of us may have his place. To be touched by Christ's spirit, to be transformed by his indwelling grace, to reflect even feebly his beauty, to transmit a part of his love—this is possible for us all, and this admits us to the glorious company of All Saints.

With Joyous Abandon

By James H. Misheff

Mark 14:3-9.

SURELY the account of the anointing at Bethany is one of the most beautiful and moving stories in the New Testament. Jesus was having a meal at the home of Simon the leper. Suddenly a woman came up to the Master and, out of the depth of her devotion to him, poured a flask of precious ointment on his head. Because the ointment or perfume was costly, some of the guests criticized her severely, claiming that her act was needlessly extravagant. But the Master was deeply moved and defended her vigorously. He realized that the woman's gesture was an act of pure, selfless, unreserved devotion. He made the incident a memorable one by transforming a simple deed into a sacrament.

Similarly, our gifts to Christ can take on a sacramental nature when they are not prompted by caution and prudence. If a person will give liberally of whatever he has without stopping to count the cost, then truly his life will abound with majesty. Or, to put it another way, maximum giving assures maximum living. This principle can be violated, of course, but not without lessening the quality of life for the violator.

Maximum Living

Unquestionably the woman gave with a joyous abandon. There is no evidence of any restraint. What a marvelous way to give!

James Fisher, a psychiatrist, tells in his autobiography, *A Few Buttons Missing,* about giving a partially-filled package of cigarettes to a mental patient. The patient protested at first thinking that Dr. Fisher had none left for himself. But upon being assured that the doctor had more downstairs, the patient accepted them with profound gratitude, and a few minutes later handed him a check for $50,000. "That's for the cigarettes," explained the patient humbly. Dr. Fisher made a display of placing the check in his wallet. "Is that enough?" asked the patient anxiously. "I was going to make it out for a million, but I'm trying to discipline myself. My financial secretary keeps getting after me for giving away too much money. He's a bore, but I try to humor him." The psychiatrist assured the old man that $50,000 was very adequate. "I'm glad," sighed the patient. "One thing I couldn't stand, would be for you to think I'd been a cheapskate." Certainly this was giving which was characterized by a joyous abandon!

What a contrast between such giving and the sort—perhaps more accurately called lack of giving—which is typical of the church today. Many would-be disciples fail to give as they should because of their fear that liberal giving will result in financial hardship at some unknown time in the future. Such persons can never experience the inexpressible joy which comes only through uninhibited giving.

Standards of Stewardship

Some individuals have captured such joy, but how their number needs to be increased! Most devotion to the church is measured with an eye dropper instead of a larger standard of measurement. Whenever I consider liberal measure, I think of my father. We used to operate a small truck farm, and I can still remember my father's measures. He would heap them up half again as high as the containers themselves. I never saw such measures before or since. The woman of Bethany was even more extravagant with her measure, however. She could have sprinkled a few drops of ointment on the Master's head, and that would have sufficed. But she poured out all she had: the whole flask.

A few drops, figuratively speaking, is the generally-prevailing standard of stewardship in the church. There is no question but that we measure our devotion with an eye dropper when we should measure it with a bushel basket. Consequently what we mistakenly call "nominal" stewardship is but token giving which borders on niggardliness.

Benefits from Giving

A token is simply a symbol of the real thing. A wedding ring is a token of marriage. It is not marriage itself. The American flag is a token of a great nation. The flag is not the substance of greatness itself. The same thing is true of token giving. Many charges could be levied against token giving, but perhaps the most severe indictment is that it constitutes idolatry. Idolatry is simply something which stands in the way of our rightful devotion to the Lord.

If only those who render eye-dropper devotion

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to God could understand what they are missing. God cannot give what he would like to give to us if our hands are closed. It is only when they are open that he can pour his bounty into them.

This sermon is not designed to raise money. I learned long ago that a preacher cannot raise money with sermons. I simply want to stress the boundless opportunities for new joys and new satisfactions which can come to those who render unrestrained and extravagant devotion to the cause of the Kingdom. Many people get the idea that sharing with the church is a favor to the church. The *good* steward knows that the reverse is true: that giving brings a greater benefit to the *giver*.

Dedicated Living

Ask any concerned and conscientious steward about what liberal giving can do to lift the level of life. Invariably he will enthusiastically testify to the grandeur which such stewardship can add to human experience. Those who give the most are not conscious of having sacrificed anything, because the reward far exceeds the cost involved.

For the dedicated steward, giving is lifted from a purely monetary plane to a sacramental level. There can be no doubt about this transformation. It happened when the woman anointed the head of the Master. It can happen again and again whenever and wherever people give with uninhibited devotion.

Water as water is merely a physical element. But when it is used in connection with the service of baptism, it becomes a sacramental symbol, signifying cleansing, regeneration and commitment. Bread in itself is mere food. When used as one of the elements in holy communion, however, it becomes a symbol of Christ's body. Our possessions, freely shared with the Master, can take on a sacramental nature.

Practical Christianity

Not only can concerned stewardship add new meaning to human experience, but it can also produce practical results. The world has been plagued by too much theoretical and too little practical Christianity. Probably that, more than anything else, accounts for the condition of the world. If those of us who claim to be followers of the way would commit ourselves unreservedly to a dynamic financial ministry, world conditions would be vastly different. The saying that Christ has no hands but ours is a familiar one. His hands must be upheld and strengthened by stewardship which is real and vital. Saint Augustine was right when he said, "Without God, we cannot. Without us, God will not."

Or it can be put this way: It does little good to pray for the coming of the Kingdom unless we are willing to do everything possible to make it come. The coming of the Kingdom depends upon a number of requirements, two of the most important of which are the evangelization of mankind and the performance of the ministries which will aid in the development of the Kingdom. A great part of the fulfillment of these requirements consists of the practice of faithful stewardship. And since it is obvious that those *outside* the church will not practice faithful stewardship, it is equally obvious that we who are *already* in the church will have to assume the burden.

Specific Plans

How can we emulate the devotion of the woman of Bethany?

First of all, consider that the possessions we call *ours* actually belong to God. Whatever we have has been loaned to us by God. Because of that fact, we should be willing, out of the prompting of sheer gratitude, to share generously with him. Immediately the question arises, "How much should I give?" Who can say? All we can do is to observe that the Bible suggests one-tenth.

A second suggestion is to give without any expectation of reward. The expectant giver receives little benefit from his stewardship, especially if his reasoning goes something like this: "Let's see now. If I give my tenth, that ought to guarantee my getting something in return. Does not the Good Book promise us that if we cast our bread on the waters it will return to us with interest?" The person who gives liberally in order to receive material benefits is miles removed from the individual who gives and forgets. Then, too, the expectant giver robs himself of the satisfaction which unpremeditated giving alone can provide.

Another suggestion is to allocate top priority to giving. So often we give only after all other needs have been cared for. If anything is left, the Lord *may* get something. If nothing is left, the Lord is out of luck. Most of us are familiar with the story of the little boy who was given two nickles—one for himself and one for the Lord. On his way to Sunday school he lost the Lord's nickel. Jesus said that a man's heart would rest with his treasure. I once knew a man who smoked four dollars' worth of cigars each week. He gave the church about half that amount. I suppose it could be said, at least on the basis of what Jesus taught, that the man's heart lay chiefly in his cigars.

The Woman's Challenge

The last suggestion is to give with a view to winning the approval of the Master. Nothing which we could possibly accomplish in this life could compensate for the joy of knowing that we had practiced a type of stewardship which was acceptable to the Master. All the wealth in the world could not equal the thrill which a faithful man would experience could he but hear his Master say: "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your Master."

The story of the woman of Bethany still challenges us to render uninhibited and extravagant devotion to Jesus Christ. If we follow her example, life will abound with new joys.

A Goodly Heritage

By Paul Lambourne Higgins

Psalm 16:6, 9.

The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
yea, I have a goodly heritage.

. . .

Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also dwells secure.

IT was with genuine thankfulness that the ancient Psalmist spoke the words of our text. Here is the expression of a great faith in the love and providence of God.

The Psalmist was not without sorrow and suffering. He had endured adversities, but was conscious of God's presence, even amid the long watches of the night. Glad for a great heritage of faith, he was likewise thankful for the security of a future which he knew to be in God's hands. He had a great religious inheritance. More wonderful than the land of milk and honey was the remembrance of his forefathers. Stronger than all the trials he faced was his confidence that God's mercy would never fail him.

It is good to recall a noble heritage. In so doing we gain perspective. The old Hebrew prophets used to prompt their people not to be unmindful of the Rock from which they were hewn, nor to forget the God who had formed them.

Religious Foundations

When late in 1620 a little band of Protestant exiles arrived on the white shores of Cape Cod, beholding what Thoreau later described as the "bared and bended arm of Massachusetts," they brought to the new world that for which subsequent generations have been ever thankful. Unlike the Spanish adventurers, who came to plunder and exploit, these Pilgrims, with the "flame of freedom in their souls and the light of knowledge in their eyes," came to build homes and schools, to pursue honest industry and agriculture, and to develop religious living.

Within five months after the landing of the Pilgrims, half of the 101 settlers had died. They faced every type of danger and sorrow and suffering. The story of those early months is a painful one to read. When spring came, and the Mayflower returned to the comforts of old England, it is well to recall that not one Pilgrim was on board. All chose to remain in their new homeland.

It is not too much to say that the Pilgrims founded one of the most remarkable colonies the world has ever known. In the Mayflower Compact, we have the origins of our American system of government and concept of political freedom. These early Puritans, with a vast ocean on one side and a strange wilderness on the other, with faith and character their chief assets, established what became a great nation, distinguished for individual freedom. Religion was their very life-breath. When, in November 1621, Governor Bradford and Elder Brewster led a procession of Pilgrims through the cornfields of Plymouth, they were singing: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein."

Splendid Heritage

Slowly, and sometimes painfully, these Puritans worked out the democratic ideals which became the basis for our free state, our free schools and our free social and political life. These achievements, let us not forget, were wrought by men and women whose chief aim in life was to glorify God. Others of a strong religious presuasion, although non-Puritans, also made their contribution to our heritage. There were the liberating influences of the Quakers and of such people as Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson. As early as 1650, Jewish refugees came to America, escaping the cruel Portuguese Inquisition, and finding a measure of safety in Peter Stuyvesant's New Amsterdam. In many respects, the ancient Hebrew-Christian tradition found its modern fruition in the colonies along the Atlantic seaboard.

In our time when people are inclined to identify the American way of life with a conventional allegiance to the status quo, they forget the prophetic vision of the great contributors to our heritage. The seers and doers who led the way forward were generally radical men and women, who during their lifetime were often considered subversive and were often persecuted by selfish interests. A new American radicalism characterized the religious and social ideals of Williams and Channing and Beecher, the political philosophies of Jefferson and Madison and Sumner, and the intellectual patterns of Emerson and Thoreau

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and William James. His enemies actually had the noose around Garrison's neck before he was rescued from the crowd. They pelted Whittier with stones for his anti-slavery views and denounced Lydia Maria Child for her pacifism. The great Methodist circuit-riders of colonial times, Bishop Francis Asbury, Freeborn Garrettson and Jesse Lee, were all conscientious objectors. When we survey the past, we can be glad for what we have inherited from such people.

Struggles of the Spirit

The great prophetic heritage that is ours can serve us well today. These are not easy times through which we are passing. The racial tensions, the economic conflicts, the international disputes are heart-rending. The advent of militarism, with its infamous conscription system and its denial of human dignity, is a plague to our country as well as to other nations. Respect for civil liberties has all but fallen before the monstrous presence of fear and suspicion. Individuals who still call themselves devotees of freedom will not speak their conviction, lest they be branded dangerous to the public welfare. When we behold the deepening effects of conformity, we cannot help but ask:

> Whither has fled the visionary gleam?
> Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

The great rivalry between world capitalism and world communism has become a gigantic battle of systems, with the individual and his rights and feelings forgotten. Is it not time that we reassert the Hebrew-Christian principle of the dignity and sovereignty of the individual made in the spiritual image of the Creator?

The brilliant theologian of modern times, Nicholas Berdyaev, has expressed well the value of the individual: "God is in the child which has shed tears, and not in the world order by which those tears are said to be justified. The whole world order . . . with the impersonal . . . will come to an end and will be burnt. All concrete beings, human personalities above all . . . will inherit eternity."

Freedom and Morality

In our Hebrew-Christian tradition, we can see the meaning of freedom and morality. The two, from a biblical viewpoint, stand together. There cannot be one without the other. Morality must arise out of man's free nature. Freedom must embrace morality, or freedom vanishes. Both rest upon religious faith. Both arise from within and are not dependent upon outward circumstances. This principle was recognized by the Pilgrims. Man is not free because the state declares he is free, nor is he moral because he obeys state laws. Man is free because he is created in the image of God and possesses an eternal destiny. He is moral, when, out of this freedom, he chooses to follow God's way.

People sometimes make the mistake of thinking they are free when they overthrow the bastilles of oppression, but they remain imprisoned in their own self-centeredness. The real threat to freedom is found when an individual lets hatred, prejudice, ignorance and malicious gossip cloud his mind and harden his heart. All of the political, social and economic liberties we admire cannot set one free. The individual must be set free spiritually, inwardly. This is what Christ meant when he said: "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

We have a goodly heritage. To be worthy of it is to have a great living faith of our own. Such a faith is more than a matter of form. It is more than the observing of ceremonies, or the repeating of creeds, or the respecting of laws. To have a living faith is to completely trust in God, and to act upon that trust. When we believe in God, when we have confidence in his love and power, we act accordingly. We do not require an advance guaranty.

A Living Faith

By faith Abraham responded to God's call to go to the promised land, and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith Paul launched his great missionary journeys, not knowing what would come the next day, but confident of the power and love of God. By faith the Pilgrims remained in New England to build a new world, uncertain as to the next adversity, but always sure of the blessing of God.

To have a faith is to live by it. The man of faith who knows in his soul what God wants him to do, will do it. He will not bother to ascertain in advance if his action will enhance his popularity or increase his income. When a man of faith believes in civil rights or economic justice, or feels that militarism is sinful, he will declare himself, even when his voice is as one in the wilderness. He will not be governed by expediency or the popular trends of the day. He will act on the basis of his faith in the good and loving will of God. When a man of faith faces opposition or adversity, he will not be completely disheartened nor cast into despair; his confidence will remain in the power and goodness of the Eternal God.

It is good to reflect upon our glorious heritage. It is also wise for us to consider again the biblical meaning of freedom and morality. In doing this, let us pray for a deepening of our own living faith to God. Then we will find abundant reason for thanksgiving.

> We hold the challenge of a noble line,
> God grant us grace to give the countersign.

The Only Voter

THE right functions of the church are never determined by public opinion polls. Samplings of the preferences of its members are almost irrelevant, no matter how good their sentiments. God must be the only voter.—*Franklin Clark Fry, President, United Lutheran Church.*

An Affirmation of Priority

By Harland E. Hogue

TURGENEV, the Russian novelist, received a letter one day, which expressed an entire philosophy of life. "I have decided," wrote the friend, "that the real problem of life is in learning to put one's self in the second place." "I have decided," replied Turgenev, "that the real problem in life is in deciding what to put in first place."

Our priority of loyalties is invariably the problem of the spiritual life. This is peculiarly true in a time of cultural crisis. The profound crisis in Hebrew life occurred in the 6th century B.C. It is the watershed of the Old Testament. Here we find spiritual hope receiving its most severe test. Politically, the Hebrews since Moses had conceived themselves as God's agents in the world. And at least from the time of David had conceived themselves as God's nation. Now Israel, the Northern Kingdom, had been lost for more than a century. Judah, the Southern Kingdom, lay in ruins. Culturally, the Hebrews had believed themselves a unique people, whose external success in civilization was explicit proof of the divine favor. Now Jerusalem was destroyed. The king had been blinded, and led away in chains as a prisoner of war. Flocks had been destroyed, vineyards burned, homes leveled, women and children slaughtered.

Wrong Interpretation

Spiritually the Hebrews had believed themselves "chosen" as the unique vehicle of the revelation of God. To them God spoke. Through them God would prove the results of faith. Now, not only had their political and social forms of life been destroyed, but their religious community had disappeared. Priests were liquidated. The Temple, the citadel of faith, was a mass of rubble. But deeper far than these externals was a disillusionment over the very grounds of faith. Had they been wrong in their understanding of God? Had God been unclear in revealing his message? Or—with even deeper poignancy—was there a God?

Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by,
Behold and see,
Is there any sorrow like my sorrow
Which is brought upon me?

But the Hebrews were wrong, terribly wrong. They were wrong in their interpretation of their political decline. They were wrong in their interpretation of their cultural disintegration. They were wrong in their interpretation of their faith. And they were especially wrong in their interpretation of the nature of God. Their problem can be put simply: Man, his present and future, so dominated their thought that God, his nature, his principles, his moral demands, had been pushed consciously—more often unconsciously—from the center of their concern. *God had not failed them. They had failed God.* And what had happened had been predicted for two centuries by a group of spiritual geniuses: the Hebrew prophets. Amos, Hosea, the Isaiah of Jerusalem, Micah and Jeremiah had revealed the nature of God. Now in the 6th century, one of their contemporaries, the Isaiah of the Exile, in that camp of displaced persons in Babylon, spoke:

Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord,
or as his counselor has instructed him?
Whom did he consult for his enlightenment,
and who taught him the path of justice,
and taught him knowledge,
and showed him the way of understanding?
. . .
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth.
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Here is the basic conflict in the spiritual life: not between religion and irreligion, as frequently understood. The basic conflict is at a deeper level: between a religion that focuses its concern upon a priority of man and a religion that seeks the priority of a knowledge of God; a relation that seeks first the sanctification of man's own egoistic wants, or his corporate political and social wants, over against a religion that seeks first the Kingdom of God.

The New Religion

The essential religious conflict of the 6th century B.C. is essentially the conflict of the 20th century. A bit of social history may sharpen our focus.

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When some of us were in college in the 1920s, American religion was faced primarily with conflict between religion and anti-religion, between biblical revelation and humanism. The two most widely read books on my own college campus were humanistic: Walter Lippman's *Preface to Morals* and Joseph Wood Krutch's *The Modern Temper.* The most influential magazine in our fraternity house was Henry L. Mencken's *American Mercury.* I remember my concern the day I first found in the library stacks Harry Elmer Barnes' *The Twilight of Christianity.* One recalls the emotional reaction of a small midwestern community to the Clarence Darrow-William Jennings Bryan debate at Dayton, Tennessee. One thinks with sorrow of the vitriolic attack upon Harry Emerson Fosdick which eventuated in Dr. Fosdick's forced resignation from the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church of New York. For many of us the issue of the 20s was an issue between science and religion, between intelligence and obscurantism, between faith and no faith. The desertion of a large number of intellectuals from the religious community, both Christian and Jewish, was as considerable as it was regrettable.

Contrasting Issues

What a contrast in the religious conflict of the 1950s as compared to the religious conflict of the 1920s! As another has put it: any man is a fool who does not know that a thousand years went by between 1930 and 1940. The battle over science and religion was settled in part by the recognition by the discerning on both sides that they had been fighting over the wrong issue. Another World War, an economic depression, the mass execution of six million Jews in the most intellectual nation of the West, the rise of Marxian economics, and the success of fascism—all these have made the issues of the 1920s irrelevant. Religion is again an important factor in culture. Many of the intellectuals who left the church two and three decades ago have returned. Colleges and universities are welcoming religion in the curriculum. An increase in religious activities is an accepted part of the academic life. The percentage of citizens of the United States in the membership of some church now stands at the highest level in the history of our people. We are engaged in the most impressive era of church building of any era in our national history. Best-selling books and academy-award motion pictures often use religious themes. The modern poet speaks frequently in theological language. Prominent men in political and academic life are avowedly concerned with religious matters.

For much of this renaissance of religious interest one is grateful. Among the discerning—and there are such in important places—it represents a genuine concern for prophetic spiritual insight. But the unfortunate emphasis is too often upon the identification of religion with *man's private desires,* or with *his group aspirations.* Henry Adams once observed that we Americans would rather be a successful nation than a righteous one. Professor Rudolph Otto of the University of Marburg makes this criticism of us:

> You people in America have secularized religion. You have reduced it to little more than a curiosity about psychological and sociological processes. You seem to have lost perspective.

And President Nathan Pusey of Harvard reminds us:

> We have not been well taught about religion, and there is as a consequence a very widespread religious illiteracy and correspondingly little religious practice . . . [we] have all but universal adoration of the state, and an almost idolatrous preoccupation with the secular order, the accumulation of knowledge and good works.

These are severe indictments of our contemporary religion. But anyone who is aware of what goes on religiously beneath the surface of things sees: men substituting faith *in* God for God; men believing that ideas *about* God are identical with an experience *of* God; men who experience God accepting the experience for him who is experienced; men accepting a creed about God as if the creed were the *whole* of God; men devoting their lives to a political, social or economic program, and believing that program can be identified explicitly with the will of God. Here is a *new type of polytheism, a new type of idolatry.* And like all idolatries, it is made more dangerous because it is often held with such sincerity.

The Nature of God

And why are we repeating the error of the 6th century B.C.? Why do we tend to worship the works of man, rather than to seek after a knowledge of God? In part, as President Pusey suggests, because we do not know our Christian heritage. We do not know ourselves in terms of our historic faith. And like an earlier generation, we are being destroyed through lack of knowledge. But secondly, it is because we are neglecting the experience of God.

As to the first, our biblical heritage, it is a fact that the Isaiah of the Exile stressed the importance of God as the creator of nature, not its servant:

> The Lord is the everlasting God,
> the Creator of the ends of the earth.

Not only was God the source of life, but man, being his child, could not escape his presence. The memorable record of Adam and Eve seeking to flee the divine wrath in the Garden of Eden is duplicated in nearly every daily paper.

And because God's ways are not our ways, and his thoughts not our thoughts, God is not only the author of life, but its judge. Some Protestant liberalism has had a curious tendency to forget the less temperate passages of the Bible. God's tremendous indictment of man over worshiping what man had made came to the Hebrews first through Amos:

> You only have I known
> of all the families of the earth;
> therefore I will punish you
> for all your iniquities.

Or, here was Jesus as he looked upon the religion of his day, wedded to man's interests, but neglectful of God:

> Woe to you . . . for you tithe mint and dill cumming, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith . . . You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel! . . . You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?

Or, here was Paul:

> O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how incrutable his ways!

How, in the presence of the moral majesty of God can our generation misunderstand him? How can we be spiritual humming birds, flitting through the Bible, picking out only the lovely phrase, the word of comfort? How can we limit the Christian faith to what we want? How can we write books, and buy books, and read books that fail to express the inexorable judgments of God? How? Unless we do not know God, either in history or in experience.

But if we do not know God as Judge, neither do we know him as Redeemer. If God's wrath is a terrible wrath, his capacity for forgiveness is beyond our deserving, *providing* our repentance is complete:

> Let the wicked forsake his way,
> and the righteous man his thoughts;
> let him return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on him,
> and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

There is the grace of God: beyond our imagination, providing we see God as he is, and ourselves as we are. There is a parable of the lost sheep, a parable of the lost coin, a parable of the prodigal son:

> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we come to such a knowledge of God, it will not be with the intellect alone. It will be because we enter into an experiential relationship with God. There is a knowledge about God that can be seen in external history. But Revelation—the real knowledge of God—can only be ours through an *experience* of him. As Paul could say out of his own explicit experience:

> It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

Moral Responsibilities

Once again, our generation has repeated the error of the 6th century B.C. Once again we have called the sanctifying of our own wants, and the sanctifying of our national desires "religion." But not all men. The Holy Spirit is not dead. The stream of faith has not dried up. The God who expresses himself both in judgment and in grace is known among men. And especially since in Jesus the unique expression of that faith has become known.

But there are partial expressions of our faith that will need radical correction. Orthodoxy that calls a creed "the knowledge of God" will need a larger experience of God. Liberalism that calls a panacea the "Kingdom of God" will need a profounder insight. Neo-orthodoxy that makes the gulf between man and God so great will need to rediscover the fact that God draws near to the returning prodigal. Sentimental Protestantism that calls sin "error" will need to understand Jesus' parables of judgment. Legalistic religion that calls inflexible law "Christian love" will need to learn compassion by standing long before the cross. When we call the part the whole, we shall need that enlargement of our knowledge of God known by diligent study and by Christian experience.

Not only our ideas and our personal experience will need enlargement. Our moral responsibilities will require complete transformation. We shall confess our sins as a Christian community: our sins of calling avarice "liberty," our sins of calling race discrimination "realistic democracy," our sins of calling snobbery "upholding cultural standards," our sins of calling our own political or economic views the "absolute of God's will," our sins of calling the bearing of false witness against our neighbor "the necessities of national security," our sins of calling considered and dedicated Christian social action "statism."

Turgenev was right. What is all-important is the matter of spiritual priority. When we stand in the presence of the living God, the only adequate way to express our gratitude is through a doxology. St. Paul had precisely that experience:

> O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how incrutable his ways! . . . For from him and through him and to him are all things. . . . Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

The Power of Trust

A WAR to be fought in the hearts of men can be waged by those speaking directly to men. It is here that I see the great, the overwhelming task of the churches and of all men of good will of every creed in the work for peace. Their vital contribution to this work is to fight for an even wider recognition of their own ideals of justice and truth.

However, they also have the power to show men the strength—so necessary in our world of today—that follows from the courage to meet others with trust. We have seen how out of present-day conflicts and the underlying tensions has grown a widespread state of fear and frustration, of distrust and desperation. This is, as we all know, in itself a source of evil. It maintains an atmosphere in which unbalanced reactions may suddenly release the explosive power of the forces which we have to master. In the face of this development, we have reason to remember the truth that he who fears God will no longer fear men.—*Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General, United Nations, before the World Council of Churches' Second Assembly.*

A Sermon Condensation from Ireland

The Christian's Defense Program

By William Corkey

Be prepared to make a defense . . . I Peter 3:15.

PETER had good reason for warning Christians always to be ready to give an answer to every man who challenged them. Never did he forget that bitter and terribly humiliating experience in the courtyard of the high priest when he was not ready to answer and had no defense. So, to save others from similar failure, he was careful to insert in his first epistle this warning: see that your defenses are kept in such good order that you will not be taken off your guard by a surprise attack.

Toward the close of his great work for Christ's Kingdom, Paul found himself a prisoner in Rome. Many a Christian in similar circumstances would have wondered why such a calamity should have befallen him, but Paul had the assurance that he had been placed in that position to do a special work for God. "I am put here," he says, "for the defense of the gospel." We can gain some idea as to how successful that defense had been, even in those difficult surroundings, when we read of the "saints . . . of Caesars' household" sending a special salutation to the Christians in Philippi. The sound of the gospel had gone throughout the whole praetorian guard.

Every Christian is stationed in his present surroundings for the defense of the gospel. We should make sure that it is well defended.

Understanding Our Cause

In our defense program we must first of all understand thoroughly what we have to defend. After Socrates had been put to death by the Athenians on a false charge, Plato felt it his duty to vindicate his master's character. He proceeded to make his great defense or apology setting out clearly the noble teaching and strict integrity of Socrates, so that all men might know that this great Athenian was a worthy teacher who had been falsely accused and unjustly condemned. The word Peter uses in our text, translated "answer" (AV) and "defense" (RSV), is the same as the Greek word for "apology" which is used to describe Plato's noble defense of Socrates. Our Lord was put to death on a cross by wicked and cruel men, and we must be prepared to vindicate his life and work, to be ready always to give an answer for him.

I am told that many of our Protestant people when challenged are unable to give a clear statement of their faith. There is no reason why this should be so. I understand that it is the duty of a convert to communism to memorize, and proclaim at every opportunity, its false and atheistic teachings. I have been told also that many Roman Catholic young people are well acquainted with the distinctive doctrines of their church and are always eager to tell others the interpretation that the church of Rome gives to the Christian faith.

Surely our Protestant young people also should have a clear understanding of the faith we hold and be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them. In the New Testament we have an example of how this should be done. The apostles had first-hand knowledge; they could say, "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you."

Heart Knowledge

To make a worthy defense we must have our hearts in the business. Peter makes this clear. When Gideon went out in defense of Israel, so many crowded to his standard that under the guidance of God he sifted the volunteers. "Whoever," he said, "is fearful and trembling, let him return home." Even then there were too many, and Gideon tested them again at the brook and picked out for service those whom he had found to be specially alert when they were allaying their thirst. The three hundred he finally chose were men full of zeal, with hearts in the cause. If we desire to play a worthy part in defense of the gospel, our hearts must be loyal to Christ himself.

It is a good thing, for example, to have intellectual knowledge of the doctrine of repentance and to be able to answer correctly in the words of the shorter catechism, but it is quite a different matter to know in our hearts the meaning of repentance and to stand with that publican of whom Jesus tells us that he stood far off and out of a penitent heart prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

It is a good thing, also, to have correct views on the atonement and to know what we mean when we say that "Christ died for our sins," but it is quite another thing to stand with Christian, as we see him standing in Bunyan's story of *Pilgrim's Progress,* in the presence of the cross and to find like him that the heavy burden of guilt has rolled

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WILLIAM CORKEY is a former moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and minister emeritus of Windsor Church at Belfast. His father, his seven brothers and his son likewise have been preachers in his denomination —two brothers and the son in the U.S.—while his three sisters have served as foreign missionaries.

away and disappeared, so that the peace of God and a sense of forgiveness have come into our hearts. That is *heart* knowledge. And the testimony of Christians in all ages has been that when men have found Christ, and their hearts are aglow with love and gratitude to him, it becomes a joy for them to walk in his fellowship and to make any sacrifice that may be needed in defense of his gospel.

Consistent Christian Living

The third essential in our program of defense is that we must practice the Christian religion in our daily lives. If we would be really effective defenders of the faith, we must be practical Christians. A man may have a full understanding of the Christian position, he may have all knowledge and he may have had glowing experiences, but if he does not follow Christ in his daily walk and conversation, he will be a very poor defender of the Christian religion. I once heard of an agnostic who boasted that he could meet every argument in favor of the Christian religion, but who added that there were two things he could never answer: the consistent Christian life of a godly father and the prayers of a saintly mother.

When Pliny the Younger was governor of Bithynia seventy years after the death of Christ, he wrote a letter to the Emperor Trajan about the Christians in his province. He told how they met before daylight and, after singing a hymn to Christ as Lord, they took an oath to abstain from theft, robbery and other sins prevalent in those days. We know that the changed lives of those redeemed and radiant Christians were the most powerful influence in the triumph of the gospel in the pagan world of those days.

What gives us our greatest encouragement to defend the Christian faith and what makes our position invincible is that, in fighting his battle, we have our Captain and Savior with us in the field.

Let us then carry forward our program of defense with every confidence since we know assuredly that one day the kingdoms of this world will have become the Kingdom of our Lord. Sanctify therefore the Lord God in your hearts and always "Be prepared to make a defense."

THE NEARNESS OF GOD

A Children's Sermon by Harriet-Louise H. Patterson

Department of Old Testament, Schauffler College

THERE is a story told by the Arabs that God created the camel especially to live on the desert. Back in the beginning of everything, the horse complained that its neck was too short for snatching sparse grass from the desert; the sand hurt its feet; it had nothing on its back to protect it from burdens. So God created the camel and gave him a long, supple neck, cushioned feet and a hump on his back to help him bear heavy burdens; these would be a big help for living satisfactorily in sandy regions.

Besides, he gave the camel long eyelashes and small ears for protection against the sand; nostrils that could be closed at will to shut out the stinging desert wind; leathery lips to enable him to enjoy munching the prickly cactus that no other animal can eat; and horny pads on his knees and breast to make kneeling more comfortable. Best of all, some think, God gave him a paunch, which is really a series of pouches in which he stores up water so he can go days and nights without drinking anything at all! Good enough, say the Arabs, but the one thing God did not give the camel was intelligence.

Famous for their stupidity, a butt for jokes because in some situations they are found yoked to a nimble-kneed, quick-witted little donkey for escort, nevertheless camels are fiercely loved by the Arab Bedouins and looked upon as friends as well as essential to their way of life. The Bedouins live almost exclusively from these animals; they drink their milk, eat their flesh, weave their hair into black cloth for their tents and garments for themselves, and exchange the surplus for necessities such as salt and cotton cloth.

There is a very close, intimate relation between camels and masters, who adorn their beasts' necks with bright blue beads and good luck charms or tinkling brass bells. The saddles are always gay and bright; and Arabs love to be found around their camels, sitting astride them, leading them, fondling them as we do our horses. An observant and wise man among the Arabs whose name was Mohammed once said: "He to whom you pray is nearer than the neck of your camel."

Jesus by his whole manner of life and his words has taught Christians the same truth about God, but we say it a bit differently: "God is nearer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet."

Hear Me, Lord!

GIVE me not pallid ease;
Give me races to run,
Mountains to climb,
Burdens to lift.

Give me not nations to rule;
Give me people to love,
Worlds to serve
And God to know.

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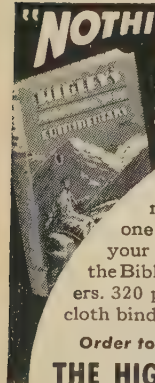

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Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

Please Omit Stars

"From heaven fought the stars,
from their courses they fought against Sisera."

THAT celestial phenomenon is of the now distant past, but I ponder it not infrequently when I read some of the church calendars which come to my desk. And lots of them do come. It is a better than fifty-fifty chance that when I open an envelope from a preacher—be he friend, acquaintance, or so on down the line—it will contain, together with the letter, his last Sunday's calendar; less regularly, but by no means infrequently, those of the past several Sundays. I have even found them in the same envelope with Christmas cards. I always look them over with interest, for a man's education should never cease, and with deepened feelings as to the comparative sales efficiency—or is it their respective flair for public relations? —of the hen and the codfish (see The Pulpit, Oct. 1953).

But what has all this to do with the stars and Sisera? Nothing so far as Sisera is concerned—may he rest in peace—but plenty with regard to the stars, for, as I started to remark in the beginning of the first paragraph, I find lots of them on the calendars. Denominational affiliation seems to make little difference. To be sure, I have not made any graphs or tabulations as to comparative frequencies and so may be neglecting material of vital ecclesiastical import. Prospective candidates for the master's degree in religious education are entirely welcome to latch onto this subject for the purpose of a snappy (and spiritually practical) dissertation.

The stars to which I have made several fleeting references are of the six- or eight-point variety, commonly known as asterisks, which appear in vertical sequence in the order of service in the above-mentioned calendars. In some calendars the information to which said asterisks refer is printed as a regulation footnote, in others the legend is interlined in the order itself, either in smaller type for those having the magnificence of printed calendars or in parentheses for those obliged to suffer mimeographed (and too often smeared) copy.

Regardless of these minor variations, their legend is always the same: "Late-comers will be seated at these times" or "Indicates proper periods of entrance for late-comers." And invariably they arouse my ire, even as they do that of a Chicago correspondent, the Rev. Ruben T. Nygren, who in a recent letter referred to them as "gnats before [his] eyes." Actually it was this letter which encouraged me to give expression to this long-felt peeve. I have neither "silver nor gold" nor their more modern equivalent, orchids, to bestow; thus Mr. Nygren must be content with a tip of my eyeshade and sincerest thanks.

There are times when tardiness is understandable, if not excusable, but why put a premium on it by seeming to suggest that it is expected and planned for? After all, the time scheduled for the beginning of most Sunday morning services is later than the hour most people are accustomed to be at their work during the week. If the service of worship is really that and not preliminary opening exercises devised to kill time before the all-important sermon, it would seem that in terms of common decency and good manners people could arrange their schedules to be there prior to the start.

It goes without saying—or should —that the service should start invariably at the scheduled time. And the first note of the organ prelude is that start. Rigorous attention on the part of the minister that the service does start promptly, with no excuses tolerated for failure at that point, and with judicious instruction, both through the calendar and spoken word, as to "how one ought to behave in the household of God," would go far toward correcting a most unseemly sloppiness in these regards. Nor am I greatly impressed by the excuse that such an attitude might discourage strangers from dropping in. "Dropping in" is a mightily overworked phrase in many of our churches. Let's try a new slogan—more biblical in phrase and tone: "And the door was shut."

Conformity

THE church ought to be more than a replica of the culture of its community. O. WALTER WAGNER. Metropolitan Church Federation, Greater St. Louis.

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Church Groups and Mental Health

By W. J. McKeachie

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

AMONG the most important assets of the minister are the groups which are associated with the church. Often the pastor who is interested in mental health fails to recognize the strategic role these groups may play when they are utilized wisely. Many individuals are unable to verbalize their problems to a counselor or are unable to place enough trust and confidence in their counselor to make use of his help. Such people may be able to work out their problems in the less threatening atmosphere of an understanding group. Even for individuals who are helped by individual counseling, an important part of the readjustment process may be the establishment of new, more satisfying group relationships.

Church services may be thought of as periods of group therapy. Participating in familiar rituals, singing well loved hymns—these activities help create the feeling of we-ness which characterizes the good group. In the formalized, highly structured activity of the ritual the individual worshiper can express emotions which he would not dare to unleash in a less highly controlled situation. Here he finds support in the knowledge that others are experiencing the same emotions, feeling the same needs and behaving in the same way as he. Helped by the reassurance of God's love contained in the sermon, prayers and scripture readings, the individual may be able to feel enough acceptance of himself to gain new insights into the solution of his problems.

Other church groups also may be therapeutic. In *The Church and Psychotherapy* Stolz refers to "a certain saintly woman who used to affirm: 'I can't preach, I can't teach, I can't solicit money; but I can wash dishes after a church supper. . . . Washing dishes in the church kitchen, I meet my Lord face to face. It is a service of love which I count a privilege to render.'" Extreme as this case may seem, the sense of working together in a worth-while endeavor is an extremely important aspect of the therapeutic group.

People may find such needed support in Sunday school classes, missionary societies, men's groups or athletic teams. What characteristics should these groups develop in order to contribute most to their therapeutic function?

One characteristic of therapeutic groups is free interaction between members. Members of the group must feel free to discuss their mutual interests and problems. If the group is over-dominated by one person (even the minister), its members are not apt to change toward better adjustment or toward more Christlike living.

The second quality of a therapeutic group — democratic leadership — has already been implied. An authoritarian, domineering leader may enable the group to raise money for missions or to cover a series of lessons about peoples of Africa, but she will arouse in some group members the same feelings of dependency and revolt which they felt as adolescents toward their parents. Group discussion may sometimes seem a waste of time, but often it brings into the open important issues which the group must decide. The group member gains as he finds that others have the same problems which trouble him.

The third characteristic of a therapeutic group also depends to a large extent upon the leader, for the leader must set an example of friendliness and permissiveness. A member of the group is not apt to grow in self-confidence and love of his fellow men if he feels that the leader and the group will reject his ideas and frown upon his mistakes. If a member's anxiety is to be reduced, he must feel free to express his feelings and attitudes frankly and honestly without fear that the group will reject him, punish him

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or laugh at him. In an understanding group, the less anxious, well adjusted members seem to act as a catalyst in dissolving the fears of the more neurotic members. The defensive, aggressive person finds that he does not need to be on guard against others, but can be himself and still be liked. Even when a member expresses hostility or dissatisfaction with the leader and group, he must be made to feel that his ideas are respected and that the group still wants him. This is not easy, but it *is* what religion teaches.

Finally, the therapeutic group must have goals toward which progress can be made. In participating in cooperative effort which overcomes obstacles to attain a worth-while goal, the group member can gain a feeling of adequacy to carry with him into other groups and other situations. As their members grow emotionally, the church groups will develop new life and vigor.

Essentially the qualities of therapeutic groups which we have described are simply brotherhood and love for one's fellow man which should characterize any religious group. Groups of this sort provide opportunities for church members to try out and practice the sort of behavior and love which religion asks them to carry out in all of society. The minister who develops these qualities in his church group not only fulfills his religious duties and ideals but performs a valuable therapeutic function in the community.

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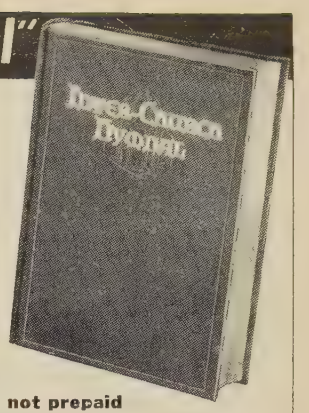

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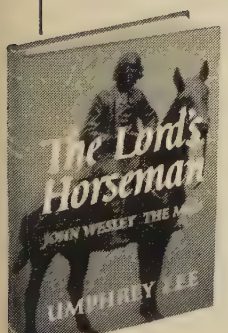

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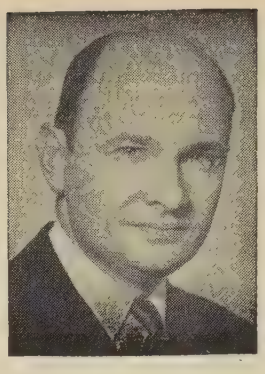

Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

Christmastide Worship

THE Christmas season offers more variety and opportunity for worship and the liturgical arts than any other period of the year. Many pastors and churches would do well to evaluate again their program for Christmastide. Are the main themes and services adequately represented? Will some of the great music be sung? Will all the Christmas lessons be read? Will the fact of the incarnation be interpreted?

Christmas really begins with the season of Advent, for Advent represents the historic interest of the church in the prophecies concerning the Messiah and the vigils and fasts which anticipate the festival of the Nativity. Advent sets the tone of sobriety and expectancy without which the full release and joy of Christmas can hardly be experienced. Advent, however, is often spoiled by treating it as though Christmas had arrived. All too many congregations follow the custom set by the merchants in the local community. In early December, they put up their Christmas decorations, sing all the Christmas hymns and other festival choral music and hear sermons on the Nativity theme. This by-passes Advent in order to appropriate the goods of the Nativity without the social evaluation and personal anguish out of which Christmas rightfully emerges. Let Advent be used with its purple chancel adornments, its hymns of anticipation such as Wesley's "Come, thou long expected Jesus," its prophetic lessons from the Bible and its sermons which evaluate social and personal needs of the hour in terms of the divine action which is to come.

Free Protestant churches in the best tradition have made one reasonable concession to the acceleration of the Christmas season. In current practice, we now begin Christmastide on the Sunday before Christmas, which day has come to be known as Christmas Sunday. There is a growing practice to adorn the chancel and conduct the Christmas service on that Sunday. The purple is changed to festival white. Christmas greens grace the chancel. The golden roses of Christmas and red poinsettias or white carnations adorn the altar. People assemble for the Christmas preaching service. Often the Johannine lesson is read and the fact of the incarnation interpreted. The sermon is supported by the Christmas liturgy, which includes the fine hymns and the great choral music of the Nativity.

Christmas Eve is also being used increasingly by the churches. Many congregations now plan a communion service for this date. No other service has quite as much power as the holy communion to bring men and women into fellowship with Jesus Christ, whose presence is set forth in the reception of the sacred elements. Holy communion on Christmas Eve may be a great choral service when the fine setting of the Lord's Supper is sung by the choir, when the great account of the Nativity from Luke is read, and when the people unite in the singing of the Christmas carols. Other churches prefer a Christmas service of prayer and music or a white gift service.

Some churches prefer to have a service on Christmas Day itself. Churches in the Swedish tradition often delight in a dawn service which celebrates the Nativity. Others arrange for holy communion early Christmas morning.

We should not do as the merchants do and pack away our Christmas things as soon as the day has gone. Christmastide lasts in the liturgical calendar from Christmas Eve to the eve of Epiphany. That whole 12-day period can be used to set forth the theme of the Nativity. Churches which have not scheduled holy communion at some other time might well do it on the second Christmas Sunday. Other services on that Sunday might include a Christmas choral service sung by the choir or a Christmas carol service sung by the congregation. Why not use the full season of Christmastide and enjoy its wealth? In all of this why not be fresh and creative? Why not try new anthems, write new prayers and litanies and seek a new homiletical slant on this great season of the church year?

Apartment-House Civilization

THE modern world has an apartment-house civilization. All the nations have moved into one huge building. Our relationships in this situation demand that we bring our concepts into conformity with the kind of world that we have created.

O. WALTER WAGNER.
Metropolitan Church Federation, Greater St. Louis.

Sermon Summaries

Second-Mile Christians

By Williston Wirt

North Congregational, Berkeley, Calif.

MIDWAY in the Sermon on the Mount occurs this brief statement by Jesus: "If any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." To realize just what Jesus was referring to, you must remember that Palestine was occupied by a Roman garrison. To provide a subtle indication of who was boss, the Romans enforced a decree to the effect that every Roman soldier could commandeer the services of any local citizen to carry his luggage or equipment for the distance of a mile.

Jesus is here, as always, propounding a great truth that makes for human peace and happiness. The first mile is the mile of galling, unimaginative *duty;* the second mile is the mile of joyful *service.* The first mile is the mile of grinding necessity; the second mile is the place where the "more abundant life" is found.

Let us apply this parable of the second mile to benevolent giving. I imagine that you are like me in being rather appalled at the number of requests for money that flood in from every direction. So we give reluctantly, resentfully, begrudgingly, making a farce of Jesus' statement, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Do you see why? This is first-mile giving. It is joyless duty, a chore. We usually give as little as we can, to salve our consciences. What a tragedy! Giving ought to be blessed, and it can be if we get beyond the first mile into the second, beyond conscription into joyous giving.

This "second mile" applies also to marriage. In olden times woman was man's private property. Her whole career was concentrated in that soul-destroying first mile where her love, her labor—even her body—was not hers to offer since it could be conscripted by right, and if necessary by force. Many Christians have come a long way from that first-mile concept of marriage. The Christian view of woman, placing her on complete equality with man, has given every Christian marriage the possibility of second-mile achievement. And by that I mean a joyous partnership in which each partner undertakes to provide those mutual compliments and generous acts and loving responses which the other can never conscript as a right, but can only receive as a free gift.

When marriage bogs down into first-mile chores—when it degenerates into a humdrum deadly routine of eat, sleep, work and bicker—it is a spiritual failure, a first-mile horror on a joyless par with toting a Roman soldier's equipment in ancient Palestine. Only when marriage is a second-mile experience does it become that deeply rewarding, mutually satisfying, continuously joyous partnership that poets sing about and writers immortalize as they tell of Ruth and Boaz, Heloise and Abelard, Dante and Beatrice, Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning. In that sense, and in that sense only, the "best things in life are free."

The cross, too, the central symbol of our faith, is a parable of the second mile as it testifies to the life, death and resurrection of the One who gave himself freely, voluntarily, sacrificially, as a witness to life's saving and redeeming truth.

Leadership That Lasts

By W. Earl Strickland

East Lake Methodist, Atlanta, Ga.

ONE of the most remarkable monuments of antiquity is the Great Pyramid of Egypt. Built as a tomb for Shufu I, an Egyptian monarch, the pyramid, along with some 69 other smaller pyramids in Egypt, is a marvel of construction even to modern engineers. It is said to be 764 feet square and over 480 feet high, built of massive stones set on a solid rock foundation. The original chamber, carved out of solid rock, was 46 feet long, 27 feet wide and nearly 12 feet high. It was reached by a passageway 320 feet long. It has been estimated that 100,000 men would have had to work 30 years to complete the structure.

In contrast to this tomb of Shufu I, we read in Deut. 34:6 that Moses died, "And he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-Peor; but no man knows the place of his burial to this day." Moses was the leader, not of a settled and mechanically skilled people like Shufu's Egyptians, but of a nomadic people who possessed few mechanical skills. The buildings of Moses and his people were tents. They had no permanent dwelling places. When it was time for Moses to die, he went off to Mt. Nebo, and there he died, alone and unattended. His people were unable to find his body. No doubt a naturalist would say that nature took care of its disposal. But the people of Israel, who had been taught by Moses to reverence Yahweh, said that God himself had buried Moses.

Shufu was buried in a monument that nearly 4000 years have been unable to demolish. The place of Moses' death or burial has never been known or marked by men. Yet the usual man on the street has never heard of Shufu, while the reverse is true of Moses. We are familiar with what he did. Many among us can recite by memory the laws that are attributed to his authorship.

What makes this difference between Moses and Shufu? Why is Moses honored and Shufu unknown? Why has Moses' influence lasted while Shufu's was buried with him?

At least one reason is that *while Shufu had mechanical skills, Moses had spiritual insight and power.* Time

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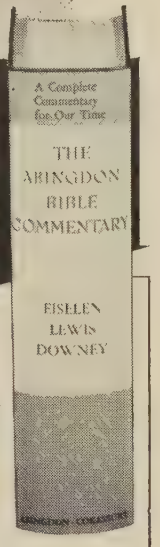

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itself has demonstrated the relative value of the two. And this verdict of history is extremely relevant to our own time.

For some years now sociologists have been speaking of the dangers inherent in what they refer to as a "cultural lag." By this term they mean that often man's scientific and engineering skills have advanced more rapidly than his skills in human relations. Man often threatens himself by producing mechanical marvels before he is able to use them wisely. The crisis of our time is that we have produced atomic energy but we have not produced men of sufficient character to be entrusted with it. We need a Moses, not a Shufu.

Another point of differentiation between Moses and Shufu is that *whereas Shufu was serving himself, Moses was serving God.* If Shufu is remembered at all, it is because he employed countless slaves for 30 years or more to build a structure the sole purpose of which was to provide for his future security. Moses is remembered for having led a race of slaves out of slavery toward a land of freedom and opportunity. Time itself has again pronounced the verdict that the leadership that endures is that which contributes to the welfare of men.

A further point of critical difference between Moses and Shufu is that *while Shufu was intent upon preserving a mummified body, Moses handed on to future generations a living spirit.* Again time has made the judgment that men will not indefinitely worship the relics of a dead past. Only a living spirit that is timeless in its approach to human problems can endure the searching gaze of passing generations. A mummified body has at most only a curiosity value. A living spirit that causes men to know the presence of God in their lives is of everlasting value.

It is true, nevertheless, that we too often honor our dead heroes and pioneers with monuments of stone in lieu of living according to their principles. Perhaps it is just as well, then, that there is no monument at the burial place of Moses. Those who would honor him may do so by letting his leadership increase their devotion to those spiritual values that are of eternal worth.

Titles and Texts

"True Invincibility." I Sam. 4:8—*"Who can deliver us?"*
CHARLES A. SURBER.
Presbyterian,
Palmdale, Calif.

"America First." Luke 9:54—*"Lord, do you want us to bid fire come down from heaven and consume them?"*
Camp Point, Ill. H. K. GROSS.

"The Last Extreme of Foolishness." Luke 12:16-20—*" 'What shall I do . . .? I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones. . . . And I will say to my soul . . . take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you.' "*
T. S. SCHLUNDT, JR.
St. John's Evangelical,
Louisville, Ky.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Joseph F. King

First Church (Congregational), Oberlin, Ohio

ETERNAL God, creator of the world, sustainer of life, lord of history and father of our spirits, thou art great beyond our power fully to know or comprehend; the oceans of thy love and wisdom are great and our ships of understanding are small, yet sail upon them we would, in humble awe and simple need.

We bless thee for both the ordinary and the extraordinary mercies of our lives. We give thee thanks for all our creature comforts: food to eat, work to do, the medicine of friendship, the healing of love, the goodly fellowships of community, college and church; our share of morning and of night, of labor and of rest, of health and sickness of life—and yea of death.

We bless thee too for the unusual happenings of our lives: the return to a place long loved, the coming of old friends, the renewed recollection of a past that has blessed us. We give thee thanks, O God for the brave and rich inheritance which is ours: for patriots and pioneers, for prophets and seers, for seekers, scientists and scholars, for benefactors and servants of the public good. For these and for all our unnamed blessings, we give Lord, our whole and grateful thanks.

Yet we know that however good the past which plays upon us, it alone cannot make us safe or secure or relieve us of struggle, peril, toil and pain in our own time. Deliver us from a false worship of the past and a false sense of our own sufficiency, that, wisely appropriating the wisdom which we inherit, we may live now by thy grace with spiritual adequacy.

Hear us as we pray for our own needs: the courage to face the inmost issues of our lives, to acknowledge the fears that haunt us; our need to forgive and to be forgiven; our need for light and life and truth; our need for deliverance from both the root and the flower of the evil consequences of even our highest and best efforts.

Even as we pray for ourselves we remember those who stand in special need, those who stand in dark and difficult places, those who face the brokenness of our common life and are most deeply hurt and scarred by it. O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, thou whose faith and hope and love the long centuries have not dimmed, create in us, too, faith and hope and love. Amen.

Pulpit Post

Correction

SIR: The biographical data concerning me in the October issue of The Pulpit is in error with regard to my position at the Andover Newton Theological School. Since the School's pedigree is somewhat complicated, it is not strange that the confusion arose, but I should be glad to have the record set straight.

Andover Newton is a federation of two schools, Newton Theological Institution and Andover Theological Seminary. The articles of affiliation stipulated that the head of Newton (Baptist) would be a *president* of the combined schools and that the head of Andover (Congregational) would be *dean* of the combined schools. We all rejoice that the president of Andover Newton is still Dr. Herbert Gezork. My title is dean.

Another minor correction involves the word "former" concerning the radio program. My relationship to this broadcasting venture remains unchanged.

ROY M. PEARSON,
Dean.
Andover Newton Theological School,
Newton Centre, Mass.

[*Our apologies go to* President *Gezork along with thanks to* Dean *Pearson for clarifying this matter.*—THE EDITORS.]

Point of Inspiration

SIR: The article by Ernest K. Emurian on "Patriotism and Christianity" (Aug.) was very interesting. I always like to learn the history of our hymns. I presume, however, that you have heard from Colorado Springs, Colo., concerning the origin of "America the Beautiful."

Each August, Colorado Springs has a day of celebration called "America the Beautiful" Sunday. A great crowd gathers in Acacia Park to hear bands, choirs and speakers. Each year the story is told that Katharine Lee Bates, who was teaching at Colorado College during the summer term, took a trip to the summit of Pike's Peak, where she was inspired to jot down the first stanza of her fine hymn. Later in her room at the Antlers Hotel she wrote the remainder of the hymn.

RICHARD S. KLEIN.
First Presbyterian,
Halstead, Kan.

[*C. A. Browne, in* The Story of Our National Ballads, *comments: "It seems hardly possible that a song of such lofty beauty should have come as the result of 'one ecstatic gaze.'" He points out that Miss Bates wrote, "I was making my first trip west," and had stopped in Chicago where she said she was "impressed by the symbolic beauty of the White City." In 1904, Miss Bates rewrote the poem, making it less "literary and ornate."*—THE EDITORS.]

The Bulletin Board

Contributed by Joseph E. Copelin, Fairmount, Ind.

AN ABSENCE FROM YOUR CHURCH IS A VOTE TO CLOSE ITS DOORS.

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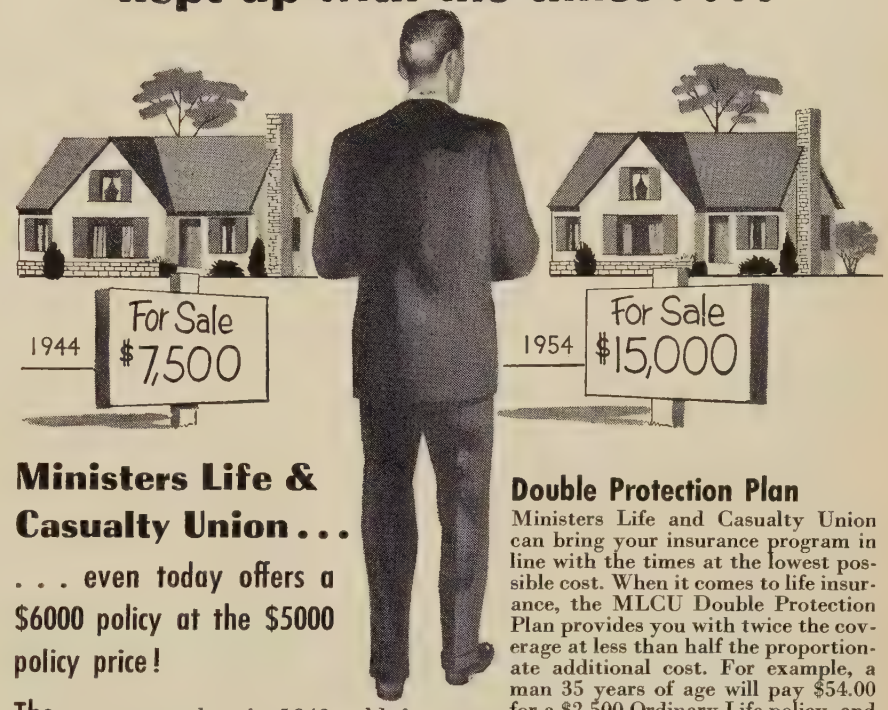

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Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• *Spiritual Renewal For Service*

AT the end of the accounts of the Last Supper in the Gospels, we are told that, when they had sung a hymn, Jesus and his disciples "went out." Many years ago I stood before Leonardo da Vinci's wonderful mural painting of the Supper in Milan. One of the things which made an unforgettable impression on me then—and I see it has become more vivid as a result of the recent restoration—was the far-stretching landscape appearing through the window of the Upper Room. Leonardo was surely trying to emphasize what is clear in the Gospels—that the Supper was an occasion of refreshment and commissioning for a company with tasks awaiting them in the world outside.—*Ernest A. Payne, Baptist Union of Great Britain, at the Service of Preparation for Holy Communion, World Council's Second Assembly.*

• *'It Sure Does'*

AT the outset of World War II, some of our young soldiers landed in Hawaii and went to church. It was a cosmopolitan church, carrying out the spirit of Christ regarding brotherhood, and one of the pastors officiating on that communion Sunday was an American of Japanese descent. A soldier was heard to murmur, "We go half way around the world to fight the Japs, and we kneel here to be served communion by one of them. It sure does beat hell!" Later the pastor in charge wrote an article entitled, "It Sure Does." The spirit of Christ as expressed in that service is the only answer that drives the devil of derisive hatred out of human relationships.—*Robert A. Panzer, First Methodist, Sacramento, Calif.*

• *The Church Is People*

THE church is a dual fellowship of men and women bound in faith and love to one another and to God. In our confirmation class we were using the Heidelberg Catechism when the question was raised, "What do you believe the true church to be?" The answer is phrased in the stilted theological language of another day. Johnny obviously did not remember it, so he discarded the formal phraseology for words of his own choosing. He began, "The church is people . . ." There he paused, groping for words. Suddenly light came, and he hastily amended his statement: "The church is people—and God." The austere language of another day was discarded; truth came forth in simplicity.

The church is people—not a spire raised triumphantly against the heavens, not a monument in concrete and stone to man's artistic skill, not the varicolored radiance of stained glass. The church is people—common, ordinary people like ourselves, sometimes selfish, not always kind, but people with a vision beyond their grasp, a faith greater than their self-confidence, a hope beyond human expectation, but all within the province and power of God.

The church is people and God, and we are never more uniquely the church than when in the observance of the holy sacrament we come in fellowship to our Lord's table. The central symbol of the church is not an altar upon which a priestly sacrifice is made; it is the communion table.

As we share the bread and drink from the cup, let us remember one another, carrying before the throne of grace not only the burden of our own needs but the needs of others; pledging ourselves anew to our mutual tasks; tending with renewed care the lamp of love. And as we remember, we shall be in the presence of something more than a memory. We shall become aware of a Living Lord.—*Ralph Theodore Haas, Crescent Avenue Presbyterian, Plainfield, N. J.*

Pulpit Calendar

Nov. 1—All Saints' Day.
Nov. 7—22nd Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 14—23rd Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 21—24th Sunday after Pentecost. Thanksgiving Sunday.
Nov. 25—Thanksgiving Day (U.S.A.)
Nov. 28—Advent Sunday.
Dec. 5—2nd Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 12—3rd Sunday in Advent. Universal Bible Sunday.
Dec. 19—4th Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 25—Christmas.
Dec. 26—1st Sunday after Christmas.
Dec. 31—New Year's Eve.
Jan. 1—New Year's Day.
Jan. 2—2nd Sunday after Christmas.
Jan. 3-10—Universal Week of Prayer.
Jan. 6—Epiphany.
Jan. 9—1st Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 16—2nd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 16-22—Church and Economic Life Week.
Jan. 18-25—Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (World Council of Churches).
Jan. 23—3rd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 30—4th Sunday after Epiphany.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

• *Protestant and Roman Catholic Infallibility*

WHATEVER our religion may be, if religious conviction causes us to abdicate the throne of our intelligence and let someone else decide what we are to think, and do, and be—then we are ready recruits for "the man on the white horse" who may some day ride down the streets of our cities offering to do our thinking for us. The basic premise of infallibility is to be found equally in Roman doctrine and Protestant fundamentalism. The extreme right wing of fundamentalism can always be counted upon to support the extreme right wing of politics. We are not here sitting in judgment on any brand of politics; we are pointing out a parallel that has disturbing connotations, and may have them increasingly. The formula today in many areas would read—if put down in black and white—"Christianity equals fundamentalism equals authoritarianism equals reactionary politics."—*Reuben Nelson before the World Council's Second Assembly.*

• *Eyes That See*

TWO young doctors who had been been classmates in medical school were traveling together in China. One was on a trip around the world preparatory to setting up what he hoped would be a lucrative practice in New York City. The other was on his way into the interior of China as a medical missionary. Sailing up the Yangtze on a river boat toward one of the many small villages which line its banks, they saw the wharf, black with coolies, gesticulating, jabbering, elbowing each other, pushing to catch coins thrown from the deck by the passengers. The world-touring doctor turned to his companion and said in a tone of disgust, "Damned dirty Chinks!" The other, without a trace of sentimentality, replied, "Brothers and sisters of yours; children for whom Christ died!" The eyes of the one were blind; the eyes of the other had been opened by Christ.—*John A. McAfee, Community Church of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colo.*

Books in Brief

★★★THE BIBLE IN WORLD EVANGELISM. By **A. M. Chirgwin.** 166 pages. Friendship Press, $2.50; paper, $1.50. The ingredients to cook up a "tempting tome" are all gathered here. Author—former secretary of the London Missionary Society. Foreword—Bishop Berggrav of Sweden. Sponsor—the United Bible Societies. Purpose—evangelistic. Audience—the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Contents—living evidence plucked from Chicago's Skid Row to India's coral strands that the Bible is the book that draws men to Christ. Every parson who bites into this pabulum will find his mind strengthened, his spirit invigorated, his hope renewed, his heart made joyful, his soul enthused and his ministry enriched.—*James V. Claypool, Secretary, American Bible Society, Chicago.*

★★THE ONE HOLY CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH. By **Conrad Bergendorff.** 99 pages. Augustana. This is a good book, a stimulating and positive book to read, undergirding the effort of Evanston. Dr. Bergendorff is a noted theologian and scholar who writes with cogency and hopefulness. As someone said about Paul, "He was not disillusioned, because he had no illusions." The pitfalls of debates upon the subject of the church are not dodged nor are they bridged—they are recognized. Dr. Bergendorff assembles his reasoning around the adjectives in his title. He believes in the unity of the church, not by ignoring history, but by espousing a fellowship that is not based upon universal agreement on all matters. In a time when the very fellowship of the church demands an understanding of "the Church," this volume constituting the Hoover Lectures for 1953 is an important contribution.—*Ralph W. Loew, Holy Trinity Lutheran, Buffalo, N. Y.*

★★A TALE OF TWO BROTHERS. By **Mabel R. Brailsford.** 301 pages. Oxford, $4.00. In this volume, Charles Wesley almost steals the show from his famous brother John. He rises to prominence and then seems to fall among the ruins of his plot to prevent John from marrying. Here are revealed the influences that shaped the lives of the Wesley brothers and finally the events and motives that caused the breach between them. The book's homiletical value is in its wealth of insight into the period of the Wesleys and their relationship as brothers.—*Gary Bousman, First Congregational, Alexandria, Minn.*

★★★IF YOU MARRY OUTSIDE YOUR FAITH, by **James A. Pike.** 191 pages. Harper, $2.50. This book should be read by every boy and girl long before they contemplate marriage. Not only will it help them to understand the attitudes and policies of other religions, and thus reduce prejudice and tensions, but especially it will open their eyes, when their eyes can be opened the easiest, to the tremendous problems and responsibilities of the mixed marriage. It will surprise many readers to learn that Protestant churches have rules and policies on interfaith marriage which are just as definite as those of the Roman Catholics and the Jews. Dean Pike states the mixed-marriage facts plainly and offers no easy solution to the problem. The heartaches and tragedies of the mixed marriage, which all ministers know, will be greatly reduced if this volume gets a wide reading.—*Virgil A. Kraft, President, Radio Institute of Chicago.*

★★IF GOD BE FOR US, by **Robert E. Luccock.** 189 pages. Harper, $2.50. The author is pastor of the Church of the Redeemer, New Haven, Conn., and maintains, in his own right, a reputation for homiletical artistry won by his distinguished father, Dr. Halford Luccock. The sermons in this volume apply vital Christian faith to the tensions common to our fear-filled age. Vocabulary and thought-patterns avoid the jargon of theology without diluting either God's mercy or justice. Quotations and illustrations, from amazingly wide sources, are homiletical models. Any congregation subjected to such preaching must be encouraged to fight the good fight of faith.—*Amos John Traver, Hamma Divinity School, Springfield, Ohio.*

★★★PSYCHOLOGY, RELIGION AND HEALING, by **Leslie D. Weatherhead** (revised). 543 pages. Abingdon Press, $5.00. Too few sermons are preached on the theology of illness. Weatherhead's comprehensive volume, newly revised, will be a good starting point for research in preparation for such a series. The author does not tone down Jesus' command to "heal the sick," but vigorously discusses every aspect of healing and religion about which the minister ought to be conversant. He believes that the Christian church "must not relegate all healing to the material methods of doctors, splendid though that work is, nor to psychologists and psychiatrists, especially those who have no place for religion in their thought and practice." The church must take seriously its divine command to heal the sick and recognize that healing of the whole man will come only to those who seek first oneness with God through Christ our Lord.—*Chaplain Granger Westberg, University of Chicago Clinics.*

★★★THE UNFAITHFUL, by **Ewald Mand.** 292 pages. Muhlenberg Press, $3.75. This is one of the best biblical biographies I have read. A fictional background of Hosea's life and prophecy, it is authentic, fast-moving and interesting. The author evades the current perils of over-sexing the story, or the creation of unreal villains. Bible critics may quarrel with the depiction of Hosea as a priest, but the author makes it convincing. His picture of life behind the Temple façade is strikingly done. Worth using in a Bible study group for background; worth reading just for the fun of it.—*Robert I. Kahn, Congregation Emanu El, Houston, Texas.*

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No Star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.

September	October	This Month	
3	2	1	**The Household of God.** *Lesslie Newbigin. Friendship Press,* $2.75
1	1	2	**The Christian Hope and the Task of the Church.** *World Council. Harper,* $5.00
10	9	3	**Psychology of Pastoral Care.** *Paul E. Johnson. Abingdon Press,* $4.75
		4	**The Old Testament and the Fine Arts.** *Cynthia Maus. Harper,* $5.95
		5	**Prayer of the Church Universal.** *Marc Bolgner. Abingdon Press,* $1.75
		6	**This Do and Live.** *Roy M. Pearson. Abingdon Press,* $2.00
		7	**The Gospel of the Spirit.** *Ernest C. Colwell and Eric C. Titus. Harper,* $2.50
		8	**Jeremiah.** *Elmer A. Leslie. Abingdon Press,* $4.75
		9	**Preaching.** *Walter Russell Bowie. Abingdon Press,* $2.75
		10	**If You Marry Outside Your Faith.** *James A. Pike. Harper,* $2.50

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THAT was a revelation of sectional prejudice upon which the General Board of the National Council of Churches was persuaded to recommend New York as the location of Council headquarters. It was claimed that a line drawn from Boston through New York to Richmond is "the axis of national influence," and therefore that an individual or institution located on this line, especially in New York, exerts a "national influence" greater than if located elsewhere in the nation. This is pure sectional parochialism. Its affront to the rest of the nation and to the far-stretching population of Protestantism deserved to be met with indignation. Proponents of removal from New York to an interior city have long felt that this undemocratic provincialism was the ultimate though unexpressed motivation for the choice of a New York location. But the impulse to say so has always been inhibited by the amenities of friendly discussion. However, it is well that this "east of the Hudson" state of mind has now been openly confessed. All the considerations offered in favor of New York can now be seen as rationalizations or window dressing for this supercilious provincialism. If the General Assembly soon to meet in Boston approves this action, the Council will awake to find that it forfeited a golden opportunity to bind the churches to itself by establishing its headquarters in their midst. The sectional psychology of this "axis of national influence" will tend to confirm the inertia of the churches in California and the states of the western coast, in Ohio and the midland states, and in those states between, both north and south. A monumental headquarters building on the Hudson will symbolize, not American Protestantism, but the power complex of a small section of the country.

National Council Headquarters

AN elementary lesson which the National Council has yet to learn is that its very structure inherently sets it apart from the people. And that this handicap should be overcome by every means possible. Structurally, the National Council is an ecclesiastical artifact, a fabrication. It is a structure erected upon another structure—the denominational system. As such, it is two removes from the people. This should define its primary and major problem, namely, the problem of getting itself and its highly important work close to its constituency. No other consideration ought to weigh so heavily in determining the location of its headquarters. In New York its headquarters only emphasize its remoteness from the people—its geographical and psychological remoteness. In that city it tends to become a mechanism operated by a few ecclesiastical leaders around whom are drawn advisers from the tiny region henceforth to be known as "the axis of national influence." The whole of Protestantism west of the Hudson repudiates this sectional egotism. That there are certain secular interests which center in New York and control wide areas of our national activity is not denied. But these present no analogy whatever from which to argue that a religious headquarters should be centered there. The "influence" which the Council should desire does not flow merely from itself to its churches. The churches should influence the Council no less than the Council the churches. For this two-way traffic the Council should place itself in the best position possible. It now has a providential opening to take a decisive step toward such a rapprochement by setting up its headquarters in their midst.

AMONG the other arguments made for New York, top consideration is given to the alleged need of being near certain denominational headquarters located there. The General Board adopted a principle which, in effect, makes this Council of *churches* merely an agency of denominational *headquarters*. Such a conception stultifies its character and removes it still further from its constituency. No doubt communication with denominational officials is important. But the assumption that this communication must be instant and incessant is not realistic. It gives the impression that the National Council offices are the scene of hectic and exciting activity not unlike that of the New York Stock Exchange. This stock market mentality is also reflected in the arguments based upon the need for instant and incessant communication with governmental, international and other secular organizations centered in New York. All such arguments are fictitious and misleading. In truth, the National Council, located in any one of the available cities in the interior, close to its churches and open to their influence, would have a better perspective in which to form sound judgments and give leadership to the churches on all these non-ecclesiastical activities than by living next door to them. Of course, with the removal of headquarters to a central city, a regional office should be maintained in New York. All the services mentioned as arguments for that city could be rendered as well by a branch office as by a headquarters. If the National Council acts upon the still-surviving delusion that the eastern seaboard is "the axis of national influence," the invidious implication of its action will haunt the Council for the long future. It will find in coming years that it lost a precious non-recurring opportunity to tell the churches of the whole nation that it belongs to them.

Charles Clayton Morrison

For the Record—

WHAT were the most impressive experiences of the historic Christian gathering at Evanston this summer? Articles and addresses by those who attended the World Council's second Assembly vary considerably. Nearly all are agreed that the unusual sense of fellowship which characterized the Assembly demonstrated the power of Christianity to span the lines of race, color and nationality which now divide so many peoples of the world.

Others felt that the reports on race and international relationships made real progress over Amsterdam, six years earlier. Some were most impressed by the spectacular worship service in Chicago's Soldier Field; many, by President Eisenhower's address, carried in these pages last month; others, by the dramatic portrayal of the World Council's work in meeting relief and refugee needs throughout the world.

Divine Direction

For this writer, however, the most moving experience was the closing service of worship in Evanston's First Methodist Church. It is partially for this reason that Bishop Berggrav's sermon is carried in this issue. But even more important than this distinguished churchman's remarks was the closing ecumenical litany. It was in this mutual expression of prayer and response that one became most deeply aware of a divine direction for the ecumenical movement.

Perhaps this is why the Assembly's Faith and Order report (section one) said:

> The measure of our concern for unity is the degree to which we pray for it. We cannot expect God to give us unity unless we prepare ourselves to receive his gift by costly and purifying prayer. To pray *together* is to be drawn together. We urge, wherever possible, the observance of the week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25 (or some other period suited to local conditions), as a public testimony to prayer as the road to unity.

Growing Together

This may explain why some opponents of the movement toward greater church cooperation stand so unalterably opposed to what they call "prayer fellowship." Is it possible that through deep and genuine prayer experiences, Christians in the World Council may not only *stay* together but actually *grow* together?

We think it *is* possible. We believe that through intensive prayer fellowship, spiritual growth *can* take place. We trust, therefore, that such interdenominational prayer observances will be held next January in thousands of communities. The ecumenical litany on page 5 might well be one of the channels through which God's power could revive the church in our time. A.M.M.

The Pulpit

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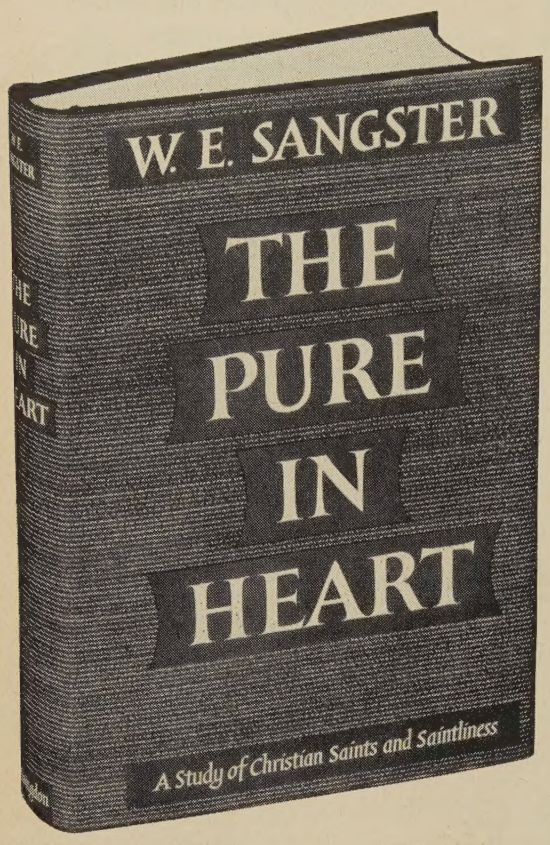
Who are those "called to be saints"?



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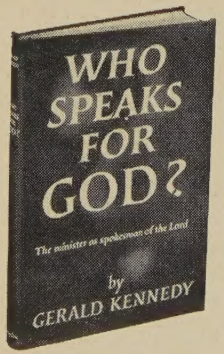

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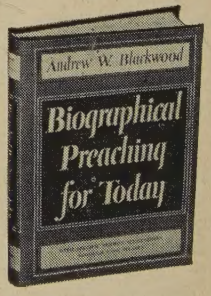
By Andrew W. Blackwood



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